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Special*

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IDEAS & TOP
TIPS

38 pages of readers'
homes & kitchens
Cavan, Dublin
Kilkenny, Bangor

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APPLIANCES

DISHWASHERS, SINKS & TAPS

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The Lawn Ranger

Cookery

The Pigeon House Café

Travel

Donegal & Easter Island

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The Irish Fairy Door Company are offering one lucky reader the chance to win a pink fairy door and a blue fairy door along with a toadstool decal and a picket fence decal. Worth €72.

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The Pigeon House Café are offering two lucky readers the chance to win a three course dinner for two with a bottle of house wine. Worth €80. Total prize value €160.



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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UK – £40, ROI – €57.90

Europe (Air mail) – £59.04

Outside Europe (Air mail) – £95.64

Surface Mail (any destination) – £58.08

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COMPETITION WINNERS FROM THE FEBRUARY 2015 ISSUE

**1 READER WINS A SET OF 100 PER CENT IRISH
LINEN FUCHSIA NAPKINS FROM ENRICH AND
ENDURE. TOTAL £45.**

Edel Pendred, Balbriggan.

**1 READER WINS A COPY OF CHOCOLATE AT HOME
FROM RYLAND PETERS & SMALL. TOTAL £19.99.**

Sylvia Montgomery, Enniskillen.

IRELAND'S HOMES INTERIORS & LIVING

APRIL 2015
NO 238



Spring has officially sprung! We are starting to see daffodils sprouting and it is the perfect time of year to tend to our interiors. Our April issue is jam packed with inspirational ideas for the home, with our flooring special we look at all the different options; beautiful tiles, cosy carpets, classic wooden floors and cost effective laminate and vinyl, as well as rugs to finish off the look. With that we also bring you great advice on how to choose the right kind of floor for each room in the home.

It is important to create the perfect environment when working from home, so we bring you several style options for your home office, whether you like traditional, contemporary or retro!

Keeping things squeaky clean in the kitchen is easy with the selection of sinks, taps and dishwashers we have for you in this issue too. And speaking of the kitchen, we visit Millie and her husband in Cavan to see their beautiful kitchen from O'Connors of Drumleck.

Our readers' homes this issue take us to Kilkenny where Felicia and Roland's open-plan loft style property is full of quirky charm and an industrial edge. We also take a look at Alan and Emer's stunning renovated Dublin home with its brand new office space. Further north we visit Simon and Patricia in their lovingly kept family home in Bangor, with their beautiful new kitchen by Wilsons Conservation Building Products.

Our cookery pages this issue feature mouth watering savoury dishes from The Pigeon House Café, which is located in Delgany, Co. Wicklow.

We can't forget about our issue regulars! This month our gardening expert, Deirdre Prince, gives us tips on looking after your lawn, and Denise O'Connor discusses how to make cultural influences work in an Irish home.

In our travel this month we are off to Donegal to explore its beauty while enjoying all the exciting activities on offer. As Easter is fast approaching, we thought it perfectly apt to have a look at Easter Island and it's intriguing history while admiring it's magical scenery.

If you have a home, or know of someone who has a home, that you would like to see featured in the magazine contact editorial on 028 9147 3939 or email editorial@ihil.net

Mike Keenan

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homestyle

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In beautiful silver tones, the Beaumont collection from **Fable** is the last word in glamour. Its refined jacquard weave is the sophisticated way to introduce pattern into a bedroom. Finish with the matching quilted throw and hand-embroidered Laurie pillowcases to add a subtle hint of texture to the bed. Double duvet cover, £110/€140; Oxford pillowcase, £25/€31. Phone 0845 6030 861 for your nearest Irish stockist www.yourfable.com



Mellow Yellow

Yellow ceramic jar from **The Contemporary Home**.
These great geometric patterned ceramic jars from Gisela Graham come in three sizes, and three colours: teal, red and Yellow. £12.
Phone 023 9246 9400. www.tch.net

Super Stan

Sun spot yellow stanley mug from **Cath Kidston**. £6.50. Phone Belfast 028 9023 1581 and Dundrum Shopping Centre, Dublin 01 2964430.
www.cathkidston.co.uk



Egg-Cellent Work

Egg saucer from **Swanky Maison**.
Available in petrol blue, mint, yellow and orange. £5.99.
www.swankymaison.com



Bowled Over

Yellow Astrid bowl from **Oliver Bonas**. £4. Phone 020 8974 0110.
www.oliverbonas.com



Top Tray

Yellow cups tray from **Jangneus**. Produced from sustainable Scandinavian birch wood and made in Sweden.
£18.95. Phone 018 6598 8074.
www.jangneus.com

Yes to Yellow

Benito armchair in yellow from **Darlings of Chelsea**. £469. Phone 020 7371 5745.
www.darlingsofchelsea.co.uk



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Purple Reign

Radiant orchid purple Batik cushion from **In-Spaces**. £29. Phone 020 7580 1990. www.in-spaces.com



Blind Faith

Garden toile purple roller blind from **Digetex Home**. These vintage designs feature an idyllic selection of scenics featuring French garden, hunting scenes and country life. All are available as stock items or custom made to fit your window perfectly. £119. Phone 016 1873 8891. www.DigetexHOME.co.uk



Gorgeous Goblet

Katie Alice highland fling purple goblet from **Creative Tops**. £7.99. Phone 015 3620 7710. www.creative-tops.com



Lovely Letters

Arko letterbox in bright purple and white from **Ute Design**. Price on request. www.utedesign.com.au



What's on the Menu?

Menu Dropp bowl in neo purple from **Red Candy**. £29.95. Phone 012 1224 7728. www.redcandy.co.uk



Retro Rug

Kodari graph rug from **Kelaty**. This superbly hand knotted rug is made from handspun wool in the mountainous region of Nepal. Available in a number of stock sizes as well as custom sizes at £429 per square metre. £1,067 for size 240cm x 170cm. Phone 020 8207 0208. www.kelaty.com



Super Snoozer

The Newton bed in purple from **Living It Up** has a grand design with a tall headboard. £879. Phone 0116 269 5960. www.livingitup.co.uk



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Cosy Up

Turquoise tropical blanket from **Barefoot Gypsy**. Made from 100 per cent cotton with the traditional kantha stitching. Kantha is a traditional type of running stitch most popular in West Benegal, India. Price on request. www.barefootgypsy.com.au



Top Trees

Black tree glass set from **Skandivis**. The set includes one of each design; oak, blossom, birch and fir. £39.99 for a set of four. Phone 0845 226 3104. www.skandivis.co.uk

Trendy Turquoise

Koziol crystal turquoise plastic jug from **Koziel**. This sophisticated jug was inspired by the look of hand polished glass but created in a modern updated material - plastic. Made from 100 per cent recyclable BPA and melamine free plastic. £12.75. Phone 014 2385 8111. www.koziel-shop.co.uk



T for Tremendous

Turquoise zig zag T-towel from **Stuff of Dreams**. £13. www.stuffofdreams.com



Strings of Life

Turquoise guitar cushion from **Hunkydory Home**. £24. Phone 019 1645 4004. www.hunkydoryhome.co.uk



Purple Pansy

The Orson Aamchair in pansy purple from **Made.com**. £349. Phone 0845 557 6888. www.made.com





AT HOME...

We love the combination of our cabinets painted in Snow, walls painted in Lead Light and Somerton Baskets from €36/£28

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NEPTUNE



Tick Tock

The black kit cat clock from **Maiden**. The wagging tail and rolling eyes of this friendly feline clock make it a real delight. £49. Phone 020 7998 0185. www.maidenshop.com

Hop On

Rabbit spot cushion from **Annabel James**. Stone linen cushion hand printed with pale grey polka dots and a grey rabbit. 100 per cent linen. £55. Phone 0845 548 0210. www.annabeljames.co.uk



Let's Go Dotty

Merino dotty throw from **Ville & Campagne**. Made from merino wool which is one of the finest type of wool: light but yet very warm and comfortable. It comes in warm red, light blue, pale grey, navy blue and grey with multi colours. £89. Phone 020 7370 0474. www.villeetcampagne.co.uk

Beaut Basket

Easter egg hunt basket from **Ellie Ellie**. £10. www.ellieellie.co.uk



In The Club

Black printed club chair from **Artisanti**. The exquisitely detailed artwork is reminiscent of an 'old master' painting combining striking black upholstery and beautifully carved whitewashed wooden legs. £752. Phone 0845 259 1410. www.artisanti.com

Super Solar

Easter Island head solar water feature and planter with LED lights from **Primrose**. Fully self-contained so no additional reservoir required. The manual on/off button allows you to activate and deactivate the water feature at any time and the battery back-up automatically activates at dusk when the water feature is switched on, and lasts for up to three hours. H x 73cm x W 37cm x D 57cm. £109.95. Phone 011 8903 5210. www.primrose.co.uk





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Big Love

Red heart embroidered pillowcase from **The Fine Cotton Company**. £20. Phone 0845 602 9050.
www.thefinecottoncompany.com



Bowled Over

Sagaform heart shaped stoneware bowl with bamboo ladle from **The Scandinavian Shop**. £33. Phone 014 3667 3623.
www.scandinavianshop.co.uk



Shabby Chic

Heart shaped four hook coat hanger from **One Brown Cow**. £15.95. Phone 019 8062 6420.
www.onebrowncow.co.uk

Lovely Linen

Vintage linen heart cushion with appliqué vintage floral fabric heart from **Retreat Home**. £26.99. Phone 016 2847 1056.
www.retreat-home.com



Hang On

Heart scarf hanger from **Getting Personal**. Made from distressed white wood, it's a great way store your scarves or ties. £15.99. Phone 0845 217 6382.
www.GettingPersonal.co.uk

Chalk it Up

Sass & Belle triple hook chalkboard with heart detail available from **Mollie & Fred**. £8.99 Phone 013 0583 0095. www.mollieandfred.co.uk





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Inhouse news

Lorient Gift opens in Dun Laoghaire

Located in the heart of Dun Laoghaire just off the main street on Convent Road is Lorient Gift. Open just six months, this new addition to the town is filled with an eclectic mix of homeware and gifts. It appeals to a customer who wants something a little different. As well as being a stockist of Sass & Belle they carry original prints, quirky cushions, lampshades, linens, vintage and antique one-off finds. Not limited to household items they also stock gorgeous bags from Brakeburn Jewellery, Celtic organic candles and decorations for a child's room. If you're planning a visit be sure to give yourself time to browse because every square inch of space is filled with a tempting range of items. To keep up-to-date on new stock and promotions follow Lorient Gift on Facebook or Twitter. **Phone Dublin 01 280 0032.**



Topform named finalists in SFA Awards



Topform, the Gort-based manufacturer of Creative Worktop Solutions, was chosen as a finalist in this year's Small Firms Association Awards in both the Manufacturing Category and Small Business Exporter of the Year Category. Pictured at the SFA Awards Showcase in the Printworks Conference Centre in Dublin Castle last Thursday 5th February are Aislin Le Provost, Marketing Manager and Alan Wiseman, Sales Manager of Topform Ltd. This event showcased the very best of Irish Small

Businesses, with all finalists of the SFA National Small Business Awards 2015 in attendance from every sector and part of Ireland. The aim of the event is to profile entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity at its best. Topform are the only Galway company selected as a finalist in this years event. The category winners along with the overall winner will be announced and presented by Awards Patron, An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, TD, at a Gala Event in Dublin on 4th of March 2015. **www.topform.ie**

Margey to stage spring exhibitions in Newcastle and Portrush



Artist Adrian Margey will be staging two solo exhibitions and sales of work this spring. The first will take place over Easter Weekend (Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th April) at the Slieve Donard Resort and Spa, Newcastle. This exhibition will celebrate the landscape and landmarks of County Down and the Mourne. Vibrant depictions of Murlough Bay, Newcastle,

Annalong Harbour, St John's Point, Castlewellsan and Dundrum Bay will take centre stage. Hot on the heels of the Newcastle exhibition, Margey will hold his annual North Coast show at the Ramada Hotel Portrush over the May Bank Holiday Weekend (Friday 1st to Monday 4th May). This exhibition will showcase Margey's distinctive portrayals of the North Coast. Visitors to both

exhibitions will also enjoy dramatic Belfast cityscapes and representations of traditional Irish musicians and dancers. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

A full portfolio of Margey's work can be viewed at www.adrianmargey.com or phone 028 7941 8087/07841 593762.

The image shows three Siemens iSensoric appliances in a modern kitchen setting. On the left is a washing machine with a transparent door, revealing internal components. In the center is a dishwasher with its door open, showing the interior racks. On the right is a tall refrigerator-freezer unit. The appliances are set against a backdrop of large windows and a dark interior.

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Siemens. The future moving in.

Inhouse news

Villeroy & Boch at The OUTLET

It's time to rediscover country style, with flowered patterns that combine a playfully romantic side with a fresh, contemporary feel. Villeroy & Boch's Mariefleur collection, with bright shades of pink, light green and sunny yellow, brings to mind a garden in full bloom at the height of summer. This collection combines a playfully romantic side with a fresh, contemporary feel and this month Villeroy & Boch at The OUTLET, Banbridge are offering a further 20 per cent off existing discounted prices from Friday 13th until Monday 16th March. Whether as a gift this Mother's Day or a new addition to your home interior for the spring/summer months, this beautifully decorated porcelain is perfect. **Phone Banbridge 028 4062 5609. www.the-outlet.co.uk**



Porter & Jones launches a new bespoke handcrafted range



Porter & Jones has introduced a new handcrafted range. Made in Ireland, this exclusive new handcrafted composition is completely bespoke and is created using top quality materials including solid ash internal doors with dovetail detailing. Other features include 30mm soft closing doors and built in chopping boards and knife blocks in solid ash. The handcrafted range is available in a contemporary or country house style in-frame composition. 'We wanted to create a very high quality Irish made kitchen that would match the standards of the award winning Snaidero range already in our showroom. With this in mind we spent a huge amount of

time designing every detail of this kitchen so it would be a very solid composition with all of the latest design features. Ultimately, our aim with the new Porter & Jones handcrafted kitchen is to ensure that our larders, tables and cabinetry are antiques of the future', says Liza Jones, Director, Porter & Jones. Porter & Jones is the exclusive agent for Snaidero and the exclusive handcrafted range in Ireland. Located on Upper Fitzwilliam Street in Dublin 2, Porter & Jones is a boutique kitchen company which specialises in creating bespoke, luxury kitchens for discerning clients in both contemporary and classic design. **Phone Dublin 01 6788884. www.porterandjones.com**

Design Yard, shortlisted for KBB Award



The Design Yard has been nominated as a finalist in the Kitchen Showroom of the Year category of this year's prestigious kbbreview Retail & Design Awards. Entered annually by the very best in the kitchen and bathroom business throughout the UK and Ireland. 'It's a great honour to be shortlisted for showroom

of the year at such a renowned event. We strive to exceed the expectations of our clients on a day to day basis, but to receive such reputable recognition from our own industry peers is testament to the hard work and effort we have put in over the past year. The Design Yard team and I are excited for March,

and we wish everyone the best of luck.' Padraig Donnelly, MD, The Design Yard. Winners will be announced at the glittering, black tie gala dinner taking place on Monday 16th March at the London Hilton, Park Lane. **Phone Dungannon 028 8775 0005 and Dublin 01 676 9511. www.thedesignyard.com**



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Cool Cluster

Make a statement in any dull corner of your house in an instant with these cornerlight clusters from **Corner Light**. Handmade from bone china and wood. £295. Phone 016 2553 6000. www.cornerlight.co.uk



Super Stag

Stag head from **The French Bedroom Company**. Available in large: W 30cm x H 36cm, £40 and small: W 40cm x H 42cm, £55. Phone 0845 644 8022. www.frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk



Top Teal

Bamboo salad bowl and servers in aqua from **Puji**. Made from recycled bamboo. Finished with a bright aqua outer colour with a contrasting natural bamboo interior. £25. Phone 020 8886 3000. www.puji.com



Nice Chap

Big Chap coffee table from **Loaf**. Handmade from solid reclaimed fir recovered from old buildings. The wood undergoes a seven step process to get just the right look. £225. Phone 0845 468 0698. www.loaf.com



Rad Rowan

The Rowan, *Sorbus aucuparia* from **Trees Direct** was considered to be one of the most potent antidotes to ward off evil in ancient times. A tree which flourishes wherever it is planted, in spring it has a fine display of creamy flowers followed in late summer by vivid red berries and a show of gold and red foliage. Ecologically very friendly, it is a favourite tree of our song birds. £24.75. Phone 015 8487 8878. www.treesdirect.co.uk



Eco Bunny

This adorable baby bunny egg cup by **Hop & Peck** has been designed to stand when not in use and will sit charmingly on any kitchen dresser. Beautifully presented in a white branded gift box for safekeeping. Lovingly handmade from solid sustainable oak. Available from White Rabbit England. £16. Phone 01625 419 622. www.whiterabbitengland.com



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Scenic Slumber

Wallpaper 444-38 £84/roll from the Raphaël II collection by **Sandberg**. Fabric on stool: Ellen from £83/metre from the Clotilde collection by Sandberg. Fabric on bed: Patrick from £91/metre from the Lina collection by Sandberg. Curtains: Hans from £51/metre from the Lina collection by Sandberg. For stockists phone 0800 731 9622. www.sandbergab.se/en

...in the bedroom

Botanical Touch

This exquisite two tone handmade silk cushion from **Swanky Maison** masterfully pairs contrasting silk fabric colours to create a simple yet stunning home accessory. £80. www.swankymaison.com



Floral Display

Small flower vase from **Skandi Home**. £16. Phone 0203 4415821. www.skandihome.com



Stowed Away

Laura Ashley rattan magazine storage. £45. For stockists phone 0871 9835999. www.lauraashley.com

Natural Lighting

Wooden base Chico floor lamp complete with painted shade from **Dar Lighting**. £150. www.darlighting.co.uk



Statement Sleeping

Sweetpea & Willow's Cuthbert bed is a distinguished piece that looks and feels truly luxurious. With gentle wings, soft lines and classical French, natural studding this bed will add grandeur and elegance to your bedroom. £1,195. Phone 0845 2572627. www.sweetpeaandwillow.com



Go Green

The gentle curves and clean lines of this Jonah fennel green upholstered bench from **Made.com** make it a beautiful accent piece. £249. Phone 0845 5576888. www.made.com



Create the Style...

Unwind in a bespoke, atmospheric bathing space.



Uniquely Elegant

With the Hansgrohe Axor LampShower, water and light are brought together in perfect harmony. While at first glance this looks like a lamp, on looking closer you find that it offers a one-of-a-kind showering experience.

There's an element of magic in the poetic design: a beautifully-formed water jet, which envelops the whole body, rains down from the rim of the transparent lampshade. The integrated ambient lighting creates a feel-good atmosphere throughout the entire bathroom. From £1,250. **Beggs & Partners.** Phone Belfast 028 9023 5791, Newtownards 028 2564 5121, Newtownstewart 028 3839 2000 and Maghera 028 7964 5599. www.beggsandpartners.com

...in the bathroom



Caged Up

A clever storage solution and a decorative feature in one from **Vincent & Barn Ltd.** Perfectly sized for adding storage to any room. Made from heavy duty wire and mango wood. Please note this item has a worn industrial look, dents, marks and finish will be random and different on every piece. Size H: 65cm W: 50cm D: 18cm Internal Cubby Size: H: 24cm W: 22cm D: 16cm. £89. Phone 0118 3287088. www.vincentandbarn.co.uk



Towel Treat

Add some class and elegance to your bathroom with these 100 per cent Egyptian cotton, luxuriously thick towels from **Milan Direct**. Price on request. www.milandirect.com.au



Back to Black

A fabulous black woven rattan stool from **Alexander & Pearl**. £175. Phone 0208 5080411. www.alexanderandpearl.co.uk



One Green Bottle

Tesco large green bottle vase. £15. Phone 0800 3234050. www.tesco.com



Everything Has it's Place

Keep everything from cotton buds to hair pins tidy in the bathroom with the help of **IKEA's** DRAGAN two-piece bathroom storage, made with bamboo for style, sustainability and durability. £9/€10. Phone Belfast 0845 3551113 and Dublin 1890 987 938. www.ikea.co.uk www.ikea.ie





Sandberg Edward collection. Vera is £60 per roll and cushion fabric, Ian, is £83 per m. www.sandbergab.se

Japanese cushion petrol blue from **Skandivis**. £45. www.skandivis.co.uk



Eames RAR rocking chair in blue from **CA Design**. €395. www.cadesign.ie

Midnight blue Pantone coffee pot from **Berry Red**. £25. www.berryred.co.uk



The stylish STRANDMON footstool from **IKEA** will add additional comfort to any living room. £75/€90. Phone Belfast 0845 3551113 and Dublin 1890 987 938. www.ikea.co.uk www.ikea.ie



Mini hanging glass bottles from **The Oak Room**. £1.75. www.oakroomshop.co.uk

Stunning large scale contemporary abstract art by **Zoe Baysting**. This piece infuses striking tones of blue with more subtle shades, beautifully textured. Commissioned pieces are also available outside of the current collection. Price on request. www.zoebaysting.com

Blue Moon

Sarong emulsion paint by Colours at **B&Q**. Only one coat is required and will dry within six hours. Covers up to 10m² per litre on average. Price on request.

This season we are seeing lots of lovely blue hues coming through in interiors. Draw inspiration from the blue pieces we have selected to add a colour pop in your home.



Anglepoise Type 75 mini lamp. £75. www.anglepoise.com

Chloe chair in powder blue from **Alison at Home**. £295. www.alisonathome.co.uk



The Irish Fairy Door Company

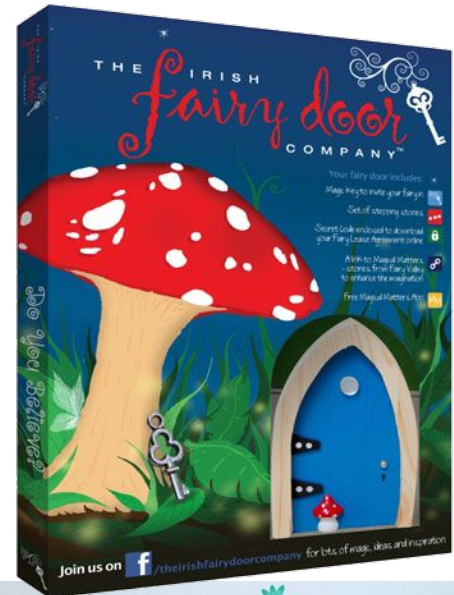
'We offer magic. Plain and simple,' explains part owner Niamh Barry. 'The little door is literally just the beginning. The most common feedback we get are people thanking us because of the magic and imagination our concept brings. Life is hard an awful lot of the time and having something that ignites the imagination like our little winged friends do is quite unique nowadays. The most surprising thing is that its not just the children who are getting completely involved, it is the entire family. Facebook is our main marketing tool and has been by far the best way to get our message out there. Everytime we do a more magical update on our page the response is amazing. And its not children who follow our page, it's their mummies and daddies! It genuinely is a little bit of Christmas all year round.'

So how exactly does this magic begin? 'Basically, the child needs to choose a door, decide where to put it, chose a name for your fairy and register it on www.theirishfairydoorcompany.com. We will then send back a lease agreement with all the rules that fairies and families have to live by in order to live together. You then leave your lease agreement, signed by all of the family, out beside your fairy door. Then most importantly you must leave the little bottle with the key inside beside the door also. In the morning, if the key is gone you will know that your fairy has moved in and taken the key as well as having signed the lease agreement too! And so the journey begins!'

'It all started at the beginning of last June 2013,' explains Niamh. 'Myself and my childhood friend Aoife Lawler were chatting in her kitchen about a fairy door we had both seen two years previously in upstate New York. We were both very taken by the magic that the little piece of wood had brought to our children and were discussing how we were creating the magic along the way. The fairy door we had bought was a tiny little piece of wood shaped like a door, with a handle but with absolutely no magic behind it. We had used our own imaginations to enhance our own children's experience and were discussing how we really thought we could come together and make this into something bigger. We were getting very excited about what we could do and what we could create. Gavin, Aoife's husband (and also a childhood friend of mine) was listening to us and with him having a small web design company, joined in on the conversation. All of a sudden, we were designing a website and packaging. We knew, instantly, that we were onto something! In comes my husband, Oisín who had worked in finance and quickly put his expertise to good use when it came to costings. We spent the next few weeks finding someone to make the doors for us and sourcing suppliers for the packaging. We had it all organised. But as we were sitting around the kitchen table so excited, we realised that we didn't have a spare tenner between us! In comes my mum and dad! They wouldn't have lots of spare cash, but my mum had given up smoking ten years previously and had saved all the money she would have spent on cigarettes in a jar. It amounted to €8,500. Without hesitation, she gave it to us. She knew we were onto something special.'

So what have the magical company got in store for the future? 'We have 21 people employed in our offices in Robin Hood Business Park in Dublin 22 and we continue to grow. With regard to our plans for the future we would love to see every child have a little magical friend and for the magic to spread as far and wide as possible. We have a distributor in Ireland and the UK and we are in more than 250 shops in Ireland and over 70 in the UK. We've also started to gain pace in the USA with lots of interest from distributors state side. The future looks bright, we just have to pace ourselves and continue to make the correct decisions which is a challenge all in itself!'

Phone Dublin, 01 4199099.
www.theirishfairydoorcompany.com



COMPETITION

Ireland's Homes Interiors & Living magazine along with The Irish Fairy Door Company are offering one lucky reader the chance to win a pink fairy door and a blue fairy door along with a toadstool decal and a picket fence decal worth €72.

How to enter

Answer the following question:

How many people do the company currently have employed in their offices in Robin Hood Business Park?

Send your answer, name, address, email and phone number marked **The Irish Fairy Door Company** to Ireland's Homes Interiors & Living magazine, PO Box 42, Bangor, County Down, BT19 7AD or Ashgrove House, Kill Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin or enter online at: www.ihil.net

Entries must be received no later than 5pm Friday 3rd April 2015. One entry per household. One separate email/postcard for each competition. Judge's decision is final. No cash alternative. Prizes are non-transferable. If you would like to receive our monthly newsletter please include your email address with your entry.

The Joy of Storage

Soak up **IKEA's** storage solutions to achieve tranquil organisation in your home.

While 40 per cent of us crave a new bathroom, IKEA has revealed that it's not necessarily more space that is needed, but better use of space we already have. With that in mind, here are some tips from IKEA Belfast for turning space into storage in our bathrooms and bringing the zen back into what is meant to be one of the most relaxing rooms of the house! For more tips on achieving organisational nirvana, visit the IDEAS Festival at IKEA Belfast and IKEA Dublin on 7th and 8th March 2015. More information can be found at www.ikea.co.uk/belfast and www.ikea.ie/dublin



SILVERAN CABINET from £50/€60

The space around your sink is dead space crying out to be used! The SILVERAN cabinet is the perfect place to store all your bathroom essentials – plus it comes with adjustable feet so you can protect it from floor moisture.

HEMNES high-cabinet with mirror door £175/€190

Don't discount vertical space, using a tall storage solution or hanging shelves can really maximise space. The high cabinet is a handy go-to place for bath linen, towels and toiletries, plus the mirror adds light and will make a small bathroom feel larger.



NORDRANA baskets set of four £8/€10

Plus if you want to get super sorted, filling the cabinet with a series of baskets like NORDRANA means you can organise toiletries into his and hers, every day and pamper – the options are endless.



HEMNES bench £50/€60

Choosing furniture that doubles as storage is always going to leave you with an enormous sense of satisfaction. The HEMNES bench provides extra storage for anything and everything, while providing a little seat in your sanctuary.



Celtic Interiors

Celtic Interiors is a multi-award winning showroom that is full of inspirational displays laid out over three floors.



The business was founded in 1993 and started out as a two man operation in Stable Lane, in Cork city centre. By 1997 due to company growth they moved to a larger premises in Douglas which housed both a production plant and showrooms, and employed 20 people. In 2002, the showrooms were completely knocked down and rebuilt into a modern, spacious building.

There is a very relaxed, inviting ambience in the elegant surroundings of the showrooms with scented candles burning at reception and soft lounge music playing softly in the background.

The ground and first floors have a selection of classical, timeless and modern kitchen displays, which are fully fitted with innovative design ideas, fixtures and fittings. Clients can freely experience first-hand the host of options available to them and also experience the signature traits that Celtic Interiors are renowned for.

On the first floor you'll find contemporary kitchens, this is also the area for the cookery demonstrations and where you'll find their complimentary, luxury coffee dock which is the ideal place to refuel and take it all in. There

is even a play zone to keep smaller visitors amused!

Moving on to the second floor you will find their luxurious bedroom collection which was completely refurbished in 2014. The showrooms are regularly refurbished to keep on top of interior trends and this ensures that each year a number of displays are changed to showcase on-trend kitchens as well as their signature classics, letting customers know Celtic Interiors caters for all types of personal tastes and budgets.

The workshop surrounds the showroom, which instills confidence in both their product and company, as they are manufacturers as well as retailers which is something very special.

If you do opt for a Celtic Interiors kitchen you will avail of their one-on-one design service, with consultations taking place in a luxurious office boasting 40 inch screens to display clients' designs. There is also an area in which clients are able to view the different wood types, paint finishes, door shapes and door styles so they have plenty of choice.

Having recently won the title of IKT Top Retailer, Celtic Interiors are certainly at the top of their game.

Celtic Interiors
St. Patrick's Mills
Douglas
Cork

Phone 021 4894121
www.celticinteriors.com

Opening Hours
Monday & Friday 9am - 5.30pm
Tuesday 9am - 5.30pm (6pm - 9pm by appointment only)
Wednesday 10am - 5.30pm
Thursday 9am - 5.30pm (6pm - 9pm by appointment only)
Saturday 10am - 4pm



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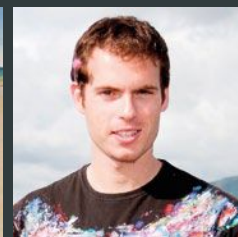
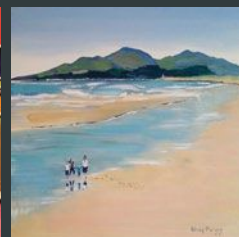
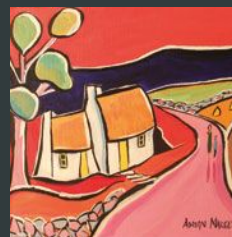
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IKT AWARDS 2014-15

Ireland's Kitchen Trade Awards 2014-15

The fourth Ireland's Kitchen Trade Awards evening sponsored by Dekton by Cosentino took place on Friday 21st November 2014 at a black tie event in Titanic Belfast. Over the next few issues we'll be focusing on each of the category winners. This month we profile Contemporary Design Project up to £25/€30K.

AWARDS CATEGORY: CONTEMPORARY DESIGN UP TO £25/€30K

WINNER: *Lisa McAllister - Beechview Interiors*

CATEGORY SPONSORED BY



Danny Lay from Caple pictured with Lisa McAllister from Beechview Interiors.



JUDGES COMMENT:

'We liked the boldness of this design which was created by the use of only three elements. The kitchen was set in a showpiece architectural space which it did not dominate but was strong enough to integrate into and is correctly scaled so it did not become lost. The designers detail extended into the ceiling with the introduction of sculptural downstand bulkheads. This was a masterstroke which reduced the scale of the extensive ceiling by day and they were used to conceal lighting which again warmed this large area at night. There was good use of minimal colour which tones well with the light tan polished concrete floor. A great example of kitchen design integrated into architecture at its best.'

WINNER'S COMMENT:

'We are absolutely delighted to have been announced as winners of this award. It is a massive achievement and a true testament to the hard work and skills of all the members of the Beechview team. It's fantastic to be recognised within the industry and this is a sign that our dedication and pleasure for what we do shines through.'



Beechview Interiors. Phone Toome 028 7965 1770. www.beechview-interiors.com

For further information visit www.iktg.ie

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Take to the Floor

Everything you need to help choose the right flooring for your home, from a selection of classic wooden floors, top tiles, and cosy carpets, to the more cost effective laminate and vinyl, as well as advice and tips on choosing the right floor for each room of your home.

Deep cherry parquet effect floor tiles from **Tile Mountain**. £15.01 per m².



Inside

38 Good for the Sole
Stylish tiling options.

42 Floor Fillers
Cosy carpets for your living areas.

48 Knock on Wood
Classic wooden floors.

50 Free Styling
Budget with laminate or vinyl.

52 Decisions Decisions
Help with choosing your flooring.

54 Cut a Rug
Add the final touch.

56 Stockists
Where to shop.

1

Good for the Sole

Floor tiles come in all sorts of styles, from wood effect, marbled and grainy, from dark to light, the options are endless, and so we have brought you a selection to get you started!



Top Tip

Ceramic Vs Porcelain:

The difference between these two popular tile structures is in the manufacturing process, but generally porcelain is more hardwearing and therefore suitable for outside as well as inside. Consider porcelain for those areas in the home that have more traffic.

1 Tileworks Pietra di Firenze Off White non-rectified by Original Style from **Ceramica Etc.** Price on request. **2** Dekton by Cosentino flooring, work surface and wall cladding in Aura. From £450/€550 per m². **3** Quick Step Livyn Essential luxury tiles in classic black oak. £26.99/€32.99.



FLOORING SPECIAL



1 SKOGHALL floor decking from **IKEA** is the perfect multi-room product, suitable for both bathrooms and outdoor areas. The sections can be hooked together to stay in place and it is made out of acacia which is a hard and durable material that will also survive outdoors. £17/€20 per 10 pack. **2** Fiumi series from **Porcellana** takes inspiration from textile patterns including contemporary oriental patterns and floral effects. Obtained through sandblasted etching filled with cold-applied enamels this series of decors has 6 stunning patterns and four coordinating plain tiles to create striking visual effect. **3** Tracia from **Armatile** is a beautiful large format, high quality marble effect tile. Available in 90x90cm from £59.95 per m². **4** **Fired Earth's** new Almeria glazed porcelain flooring in Sorbas, one of three versatile colourways. These low-maintenance tiles replicate traditional Spanish stone floors. They measure 60 x 30cm and cost £39.98/€45.90 per m².





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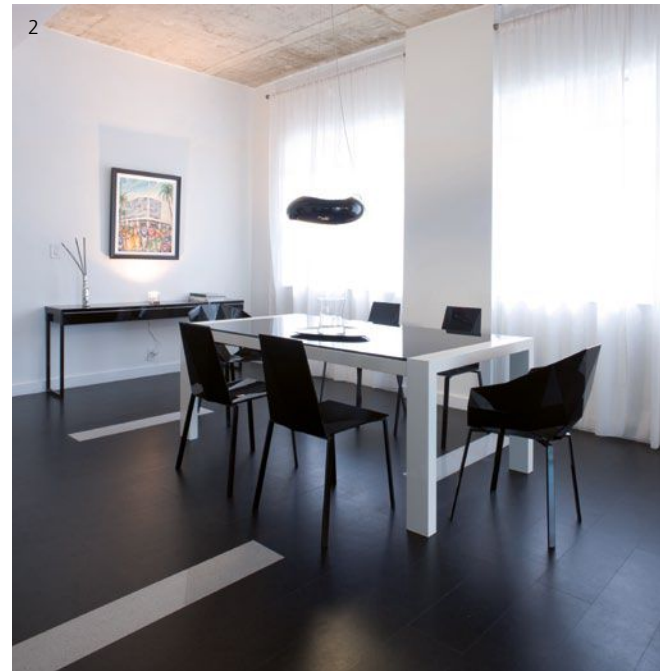


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www.wilsonsyard.com



1 This natural stone tile from **Wilsons Yard** gives a warmth and natural feel to this room. Its mixed tones help it tie in with various styles, plus makes it easy to maintain. £38.50 per m². **2 Granite Transformations** agglomerate used as flooring. From £385 per m². **3** Wood effect porcelain tiles available in a wide range of lengths and colours from **Versatile**, all of glamour of wood with no maintenance. From €57.95 per m².

For stockists see page 56





Floor Fillers

The latest carpet trends for your home.

Fitzroy Black 100 per cent wool carpet from
Roger Oates. 70cm wide. £118 per linear metre.



Graphic Print

Make a bold statement and add interest to your home with these carpets.

1 Tribe Tea Rose carpet from the Boho Collection by **Ulster Carpets**. £63 per m².

2 Clevancy Stripe wool textured carpet from the Avebury Collection by **Cormar Carpets**. Price on request.

3 Pebble Houndstooth from **Brintons** Padstow Collection is a heavy duty, woven Axminster carpet. £75 per m².

4 **Axminster** Royal Borough Windsor Itschner light grey 100 per cent pure new wool carpet. £100 per m².



Expert Advice

David Cormack, Marketing Director, Cormar Carpets

'Easter signals the start of the home improvement season and thanks to the new culture of home 'makeover mania' we no longer just decorate, we give a room a complete facelift. And nothing transforms it more than swapping a tired old carpet for one in a fashionable new shade. With the extra two days' holiday homeowners can't seem to resist the urge to re-decorate and a new carpet really does have an enormous impact on the overall feel of a room. It looks more up-to-date, feels cleaner and fresher.'



Expert Advice

Advice for buying carpets from Ulster Carpets

When choosing a carpet it is important to take into account the area for which the carpet is destined. For example, you may want to avoid a light coloured carpet on heavy traffic areas like stairs or children's bedrooms where they are likely to be at risk of muddy footprints. Choosing a hardwearing 80 per cent wool/20 per cent nylon mix will ensure the floor covering can withstand the wear and tear of family life. When budgeting you should also remember to factor in the price of underlay. A good quality underlay will not only add comfort to your carpet, it will also increase its lifespan, so this is a worthwhile investment. There are many different options to consider including underlay suitable for use with underfloor heating. You should also consider how a space will flow. For example, using similar colours and tones throughout a ground floor can make the space seem larger and more airy while using clashing patterns or colours breaks up the individual spaces making them appear smaller.

Neutrals

A neutral carpet offers a calming backdrop wherever it is used.

1 Mitton Mouse from **Adam Carpets** Fine Worcester Twist range. Prices on request.

2 Axminster Simply Natural Breccia Eggshell 100 per cent pure new wool carpet. £55 per m².

3 Imperial Quartz from the Sissinghurst Castle Collection by **Crown Floors**. £18/€24.





In the Pink

Pink is proving popular in all shades whether, walls, furnishings or floors.

1 Brintons Bell Twist Rosebud carpet. Bell Twist has a textured appearance and uses an 80 per cent wool, 20 per cent nylon blend for performance and wearability. £40 per m².

2 Antelope from the Roseland Collection by **Crown Floors**. £26/€35 per m².

3 Paper Moon from the Sensation Twist range by **Cormar Carpets**. £22 per m².

Expert Advice

Eamonn Prescott, Adam Carpets

With regard to trends, natural colours are still very much in, as are greys. There has also been an increase in both dark blue and petrol blue. We are forecasting that soft pinks will also be very much on trend for this year.





Floral & Fauna

Bring the beauty of the outdoors indoors with these carpets...

1 Axminster Winter Melody
100 per cent pure new wool
carpet. £80 per m².

2 This yellow Ruskin Butterfly
carpet from **Brintons**
Timorous Beasties Collection
makes a dramatic statement
wherever it is used. £95 per m².

3 Bloomsbury Summer
Breeze carpet from the
Boho Collection by **Ulster**
Carpets. £63 per m².

4 Blenheim bespoke carpet.
Price on request.





Knock on Wood

There is something about a real wood floor that brings a certain charm to a home. Here we have a selection of both engineered wood and solid wood floors for you to pine over.





5

1 Junckers Mountain Silver textured solid Oak, £131/€173.40 per m². **2 Kährs** Oak Gate is a one strip oak wood floor, light smoked with a microbevelled edge and matt lacquer prefinish. From Kährs Linnea Habitat Collection. From £37.20 per m². **3** These wonderful exclusive Versailles floor panels are handmade with 100% antique oak. They project a rich stylish and tactile look and are exclusively available from **Wilsons Yard**. Price on request. **4 Fired Earth's** Coastline oak in Seashell, one of six beautiful finishes. This brushed and oiled flooring costs £74.94/€86.03 per m². for engineered oak. Solid oak boards are also available. **5 Quick Step** Palazzo engineered wood in vintage oak matt. £64.99/€74.95. **6 Junckers** Black Oak Wide Board, from £119/€157.52 per m². **7 HERITAGE** 20mm engineered floor in prrefinished Arctic Oak, brushed and matt white varnished from **Wogans of Dunleer**. €69.99 m²/€58.52 yd².

For stockists see page 56



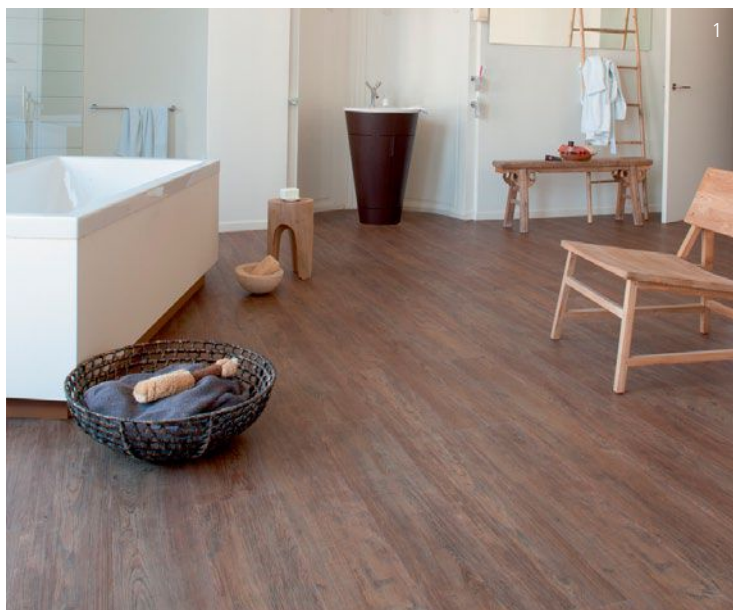
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Top Tip

The difference between solid and engineered wood flooring is the composition of the wood panels. Solid wood is just that, cut from the tree and cut to size into wooden panels. Engineered wood is made of several layers of wood pressed and glued together.

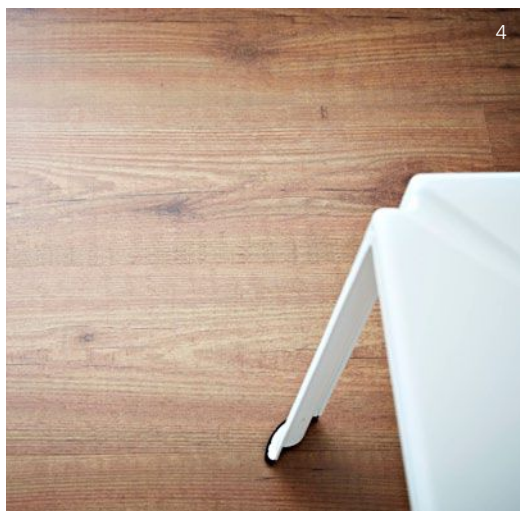


7



Free Styling

Vinyl and laminate flooring are a great cost effective alternative to having wood or tiles. With the range of styles available, from wood effect to patterned, there will be something to suit your home, even on a budget.





1 Latin Pine 24874 from **Moduleo's** Transform range. From £19.99 / €33.70 per m². **2** Karndean Looselay Series Three in Hartford. £42.99 per m². **3** Quick Step Impressive Ultra in concrete wood light grey from **Quick Step**. £27.99 / €35.56. **4** **IKEA's** TUNDRA laminated flooring comes in a variety of wood effects that are hard-wearing and will not fade in sunlight. It is easily laid with a click system, no adhesive required. £7 / €8.13 per m². **5** Avenue vinyl Tita XT **La Paz** flooring. £24 / €32. **6** Robusto 12mm Heavy Duty Laminate Harbour Oak Grey from **Wogans of Dunleer**. €20.95 per m² / €17.52 per yd². **7** **Leoline** vinyl Luxury Woods Toronto. £24 / €32. **8** **Leoline** introduces its woodmark SR Cushion vinyl collection, Toulouse. £22 per m². Euro price on request.

For stockists see page 56



Top Tip

Although both laminate and vinyl are budget friendly, they are both rather different by nature. Vinyl works better in high moisture areas, perfect for the bathroom, but laminate is said to offer more comfort underfoot as it has wood content and comes thicker than vinyl.

Decisions Decisions

Choosing the right flooring for a particular room in your home may seem like a daunting decision. It's a process that combines your personal taste with careful thinking about practicality. After all, it's a surface you, your family and friends will walk, stand and sit on, your kids will spill, play and grow up on. But asking yourself a few key questions at the beginning of the process should help reduce your worry, ease your choice and increase your long-term satisfaction with your new floor.

Original Style Oxford three colour pattern tile with Melville border in chester mews, revival grey and dover white. £87.72.

Questions on the Floor

What's the size of the family that will regularly use the room, and how much traffic will the floor receive? Children definitely make a difference. Any pets? Will the floor be exposed to moisture regularly? How often is the floor likely to need cleaning? How long do you hope and expect your new floor to last?

Kitchens

For kitchen flooring, durability and ease of cleaning are top criteria. Good choices are vinyl, ceramic tile and wood. Vinyl is inexpensive and provides an easy-to-clean surface and comes in countless designs. Ceramic tiles are even better. Also easy to maintain and available in a huge range, they offer superior durability, resisting most dents, dings and scratches. There are a couple of things to bear in mind about tiles, however. One is that if installed over a floor that has structural movement, ceramic tiles are prone to crack. So if your house is very old, it's probably a good idea to replace your subfloor while you're at it. A second point that's worth thinking about, particularly if your family includes children or anyone with special safety needs, is that smooth tiles can be very slippery when they get wet, so you may want to consider ones with a textured surface.

Then there's wood. While some feel it's an unusual choice now that there are so many different flooring options, hardwood still remains an excellent choice for the kitchen. Everybody ends up spending a lot of time there, and wood floors can add a feeling of warmth. At the same time, wood is also good at coping with the high traffic volume. One important reminder: When installing wood flooring in a kitchen, do make sure you apply a good protective finish, such as a polyurethane, to guard against the many kinds of moisture that inevitably make their way onto the kitchen floor.

Bathrooms

Even more so than kitchens, bathrooms obviously see a lot of moisture. Linoleum, ceramic tile, limestone, marble and granite are all popular and functional flooring choices, coming with a range of different price tags and requiring various levels of expertise to install. Working with ceramic or even vinyl tiles is relatively easy, and many homeowners should be able to successfully do it themselves. Ceramic tiles look great and provide superb durability, but they aren't cheap, with marble being even more expensive.



Living Areas

Flooring for the rest of your home's living space really comes down to a matter of personal choice. Some people like tile in their living areas, some wood, others carpet, perhaps all three.

Tile offers a nearly unlimited variety of patterns and styles, from the simple to the exotic, which make it possible for tiles to give a room a very creative feel. On the other hand, tiles can feel cold and hard underfoot, so they may not be the best choice if you're looking for something a bit more cosy.

Wood flooring has a natural beauty and elegance, feels warmer and is easier on your feet and back. It is stain-resistant, easy-to-clean and offers long-term versatility because it can be sanded and refinished. You have a number of options when it comes to both hard and soft flooring woods. Oak is the most popular, while maple, birch, and pine are also widely used. Keep in mind that one place to avoid wood flooring is below ground, where constant humidity can cause you some problems. If you want the look of wood floors in a finished basement, for instance, you're better off with a wood laminate.

Finally, there's carpet. In terms of sheer warmth and intimacy, carpet is probably tops. It's especially great for bedrooms and anywhere you may like to spend a lot of time barefoot. Carpet also provides a certain amount of sound-proofing, as well as some insulation. Carpet is available in a wide array of styles, piles and costs. Whether your preference is for classic wool or resilient nylon, just do your homework beforehand. Remember that the quality and thickness of the pad you use underneath is nearly equal in importance to the carpet itself in determining what its life span will be in your home.

Take Note

Choosing a floor is a big decision, but it doesn't have to be overly stressful. Plan ahead, asking yourself all the important questions beforehand, including who will use the room, what atmosphere you hope to create, how much effort you want to expend installing and maintaining it, and of course, what you're willing to spend. Having done that, you'll be well on your way to picking the perfect floor.



1



2



3

Cut a Rug

Add layers to your flooring with rugs that are functional and add interest to your interior space.

1 This Canada rug is from Spanish Brand Gan Rugs at **Lomi Design**. €395.
2 Eichholtz Carpet in Caton Grey at **Occa-Home**. From £1,000. 3 Kodari Mist rug from **Kelaty**. £1,067. 4 WW401 Wool Moscow Ice with C20 Cotton Herringbone French Navy 1.8mx1.2m rug from **Crucial Trading**. £346.80.

4



5



6



7

5 This rug is made up from BS101 Wool Biscayne Lemon, £73 per m² with C34 Cotton Herringbone Pale Lemon border, £16.40 per m², both from **Crucial Trading**. 6 Flint grey Tolsey loop pile rug from **Neptune**. £325/€400. 7 From **The French Bedroom Company** this is a playful piece that marries the meticulous and geometric Persian carpet with the natural irregularity of an animal skin rug. This rug will add a beautifully surreal touch to any interior. L165xW150cm. £688. 8 **Roger Oates** 100 per cent wool rug in Franklin Indigo. 240cmx220cm. £1,347.



8

For stockists see page 56



Left: This Sanderson rug from **The Orchard** will add a pop of colour to any room. From €600 (depending on style and size).

Below: Margo Selby for **John Lewis** feather bold rug. £650.



Left: Mahout Lifestyle rust and cream large chevron cotton Dhurrie. From £285.

Right: Orla Kiely multi stem rug from **The Rug Seller**. From €648.

STOCKISTS

A

Armatile

Armagh 028 3752 7007, Belfast 028 9068 2752 and Newry 028 3026 6021.
www.armatile.com

Adam Carpets

01562 822247.
www.adamcarpets.com

Amara

www.amara.com

Avenue Floors

www.avenuefloors.co.uk

Axminster

www.axminster-carpets.co.uk

B

Blenheim Carpets

www.blenheim-carpets.com

Brintons Fine Carpets

01562 748 000 (s).
www.brintons.net

C

Ceramica Etc

Bangor 028 9127 1227.
www.ceramicaetc.co.uk

Cormar Carpets

www.cormarcarpets.co.uk

Crown Floors

www.crownfloors.co.uk

Crucial Trading

01562 743747.
www.crucial-trading.com

D

Dekton by Cosentino

Dublin 01 6267334 (s).
www.dekton.com

F

Fired Earth

Belfast 028 9023 8000 and
Dun Laoghaire 01 6636160.
www.firedearth.com

G

Granite Transformations

Roscrea, 050 524474
www.granitetransformations.co.uk

I

IKEA

Belfast 0845 3551113 and
Dublin 1890 987 938.
www.ikea.co.uk www.ikea.ie

J

John Lewis

03456 049049.
www.johnlewis.com

Junckers

01376 534 700 (s).
www.junckers.co.uk

K

Kährs

Ceco Flooring, Carryduff 028 9081 7272.
TileStyle, Dublin 01 8555200.
Kährs (UK) 023 9245 3045.
www.kahrs.co.uk

Karndean

Dublin 01 6569884 (s).
NI 01386 820 100 (s)
www.karndean.co.uk

Kelaty

020 82070208.
www.kelaty.com

L

Leoline

Johns Carpets, Antrim 028 9446 2871.
Seymour Dugan, Lisburn 028 9266 3587.
www.leolane.co.uk

Lomi Design

Dublin 01 8397001.
www.lomi.ie

M

Mahout Lifestyle

0845 1166333.
www.mahoutlifestyle.com

Moduleo

www.moduleo.co.uk

N

Neptune

www.neptune.com

O

Occa-Home

03330 3630330.
www.occa-home.co.uk

P

Porcellana

Belfast 028 9024 0040.
www.porcellanatilestudio.com

Q

Quick Step

Alana Interiors,
Lurgan 028 3834 8155.
Carriagline Furniture & Carpet,
Carriagline 021 4919466.
Des Kelly Interiors Dublin,
Dublin 01 4601114.
www.quick-step.com

R

Roger Oates

01531 632718.
www.rogeroates.com

T

The French Bedroom Company

01444 415430.
www.frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk

Tile Mountain

01782 223822 (s).
www.tilemountain.co.uk

The Orchard

Dublin 01 6288903.
www.theorchard.ie

The Rug Seller

www.therugseller.co.uk

U

Ulster Carpets

Craigavon 028 3833 4433 (s).
www.ulstercarpets.com

V

Versatile

Navan 046 9029444.
www.versatile.ie

W

Wilsons Conservation

Building Product
Dromore 028 9269 2304.
www.wilsonsyard.com

Wogans of Dunleer

041 6861000.
www.wogans.com

READER'S REFERENCE: (s) = Phone for stockist details.

Home Work

Ideas to help you create the perfect office space for your needs and to suit the overall style of your home.

From **Occa-Home**, Anglepoise floor lamp, £2,400; Pantone Flower Pot, £53; & Tradition In Between Chair SK1, £329; ByAlex A Desk, £516.00; Muuto Mini Stacked Ash Shelf With Yellow Backboard - Medium, £89; Muuto Mini Stacked Ash Shelf With Grey Backboard - Medium, £89; Muuto Stacked Ash Shelf With Rose Backboard - Medium, £125.



Traditional



1 Neptune Chichester original workstation. £1,595. **2 The Requiem** black ostrich leather desk from **Alexander & Pearl** is both magnificent and decadent. £895. **3 British** equestrian style clock from Eichholtz at **LuxDeco**. £70. **4 Block** calendar from **Bedeck Home**. £12.50. **5 Gainsborough** swivel chair from **Darlings of Chelsea**. £550. **6 The** tan leather Percy pen pot from **Leather & Lavender** has a luxurious suede interior and is the perfect accessory for your home office. £25. **7 Vintage** Wooden Filing Cabinet from **Raspberry Mash**. £55. **8 The Montana** office chest from **The Orchard** is inspired by vintage writing bureaus. Also available with a two-door front storage system. The lovely warm honey oak finish is a great detail for a fantastic piece of furniture. From €790. **9 Rudyard** desk from **Loaf**. £495.





Contemporary





6



7

1 Alessi 'Firenze' black and white wall clock from **Bedeck Home**. £43. **2** Arrow Table Lamp from **BHS**. £95. **3** The BEKANT desk from **IKEA** has a cable net under the surface to keep everything tidy and it comes in various colour combinations. £100-£120/€120-€140. **4** From **California Shutters**, classic poplar wood shutters in Little Greene pink slip custom colour paint. From £177 per m². **5** **Harvey Norman** Femme Fatale chair in purple. £135. **6** The Persiana secretary desk is shown in cherry wood with a turquoise finish from **Oficina Inglesa**. Price on request. **7** This personalised custom-made framed chalkboard from **No Ordinary Gift Company** can be personalised with any wordings of your choice. £50. **8** Neptune Manhattan Rectangular Desk from **Browsers**. €1,245. **9** Denver desk from **Furniture Village**. £109.



8



9

Retro



1 Mini mid century desk from **West Elm**. Price on request.
2 Milligan Desk from **Atkin & Thyme**. £379. 3 Umbra Woodrow waste bin from **Amara**. £20.
4 Country Oak 24958 flooring from **Moduleo's** Select range. Price on request. 5 Arles desk lamp from **Inspaces**. £96.





6 Seattle office chair from **Harvey Norman**.
£79/€99. **7** Smoke from the Bell Twist
Collection from **Brintons**. £40 per m².



STOCKISTS

A

Alexander & Pearl
Phone 020 8508 0411.
www.alexanderandpearl.co.uk
Amara
www.amara.com
Atkin & Thyme
Phone 01494 793501.
www.atkinandthyme.co.uk

B

Bedeck Home
Belfast 028 9066 9828.
Linen Green,
Moygahsel 028 8772 9153.
www.bedeck.com
BHS
www.bhs.co.uk
Brintons
www.brintons.co.uk
Browsers
Dublin 061 414490.
www.browsers.ie

C

California Shutters
www.californiashutters.co.uk

D

Darlings of Chelsea
Phone 020 7371 5745.
www.darlingsofchelsea.co.uk

F

Furniture Village
Phone 0800 8048879.
www.furniturevillage.co.uk

H

Harvey Norman
www.harveynorman.ie
www.harvey-norman.co.uk

I

IKEA
Belfast 0845 3551113.
Dublin 1890 987 938.

www.ikea.co.uk
www.ikea.ie
Inspaces
Phone 020 7580 1990.
www.in-spaces.com

L

Leather & Lavender
www.leatherandlavender.co.uk
LuxDeco
Phone 020 3586 1536.
www.LuxDeco.com
Loaf
Phone 0845 468 0698.
www.loaf.com

M

Moduleo
www.moduleo.co.uk

N

Neptune
www.neptune.com

No Ordinary Gift Company

Phone 01295 261161.
www.noordinarygiftcompany.co.uk

O

Occa Home
Phone 0330 363 0330.
www.occa-home.co.uk
Oficina Inglesa
Phone 020 7226 4569.
www.oficinainglesa.com

R

Raspberry Mash
www.raspberrymash.co.uk

T

The Orchard
Dublin 01 6288903.
www.theorchard.ie

W

West Elm
www.westelm.co.uk

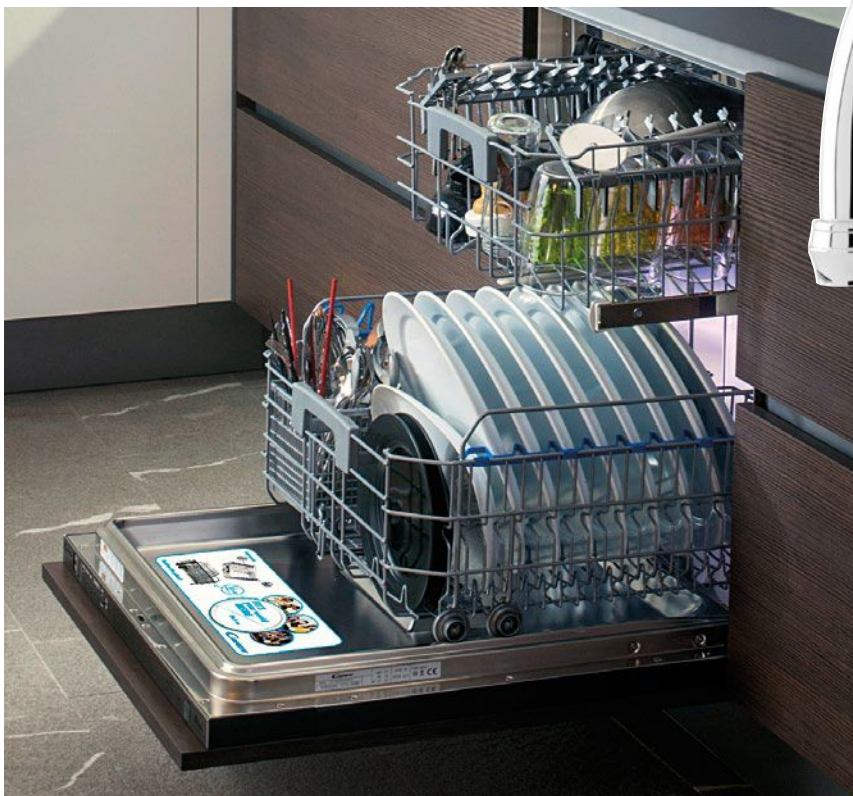
Smeg's DF6FABP2 retro freestanding dishwasher in cream has an A+ energy rating, A for drying performance and an A for cleaning performance. The half load FLEXIZONE feature allows you to wash a reduced load, with no restriction on where the items are placed. Price on request.



Spring Clean

With this selection of the latest sinks, taps and dishwashers you will find functional and stylish options. Everything you need to keep your kitchen gleaming!

The **Grohe** Blue Chilled and Sparkling tap water. This innovative tap brings instant refreshment with a choice of still, medium and sparkling water instantly. Price on request.



Neptune Perrin and Rowe Single lever tap.
£250/€325.

Candy Maxi Plate Dishwasher Lifestyle Close Up. Price on request.

SINKS, TAPS AND DISHWASHERS



Franke's new Oyster colour has been introduced into its Pebel (pictured above in Oyster) and Mythos inset, and Kubus undermount granite sink ranges. Oyster exudes a warm, modern, relaxed feel and is design-versatile with the latest trends in kitchen doors and worksurfaces for organic colours, and easy-living modern woodgrains. The Pebel single bowl sink, with its modern curved design, is available at £387.50. A 1.5 bowl option is also available at £401.50. Both models also benefit from Franke's 50 year guarantee.



The new Janus sink range from **Carron Phoenix** combines exceptional value and high performance. Two models, the Janus 100 single bowl synthetic sink and the 150 one and a half bowl are available in the two popular colour options of Arctic White and Graphite. Both models are reversible, fit a minimum cabinet size of 600mm, and come with a lifetime guarantee. Priced individually at £149 and £169 for the Janus 100 and 150 models respectively or, for example, at a Value Pack price with Pura tap in chrome for £180 and £200.

The Elan 1.0 bowl from **Astracast** measures 98 x 51 x 17.5 cm a (£120/€150) and the 1.5 bowl measures 98 x 51 x 17.5 (£175/€220).





CDA wc 600 dishwasher is packed with features; 15 place settings. A++ energy rating, A for cleaning and drying, three spray levels for extra efficient cleaning. Cutlery tray in top level. Nine programmes including three auto settings where the machine adjusts water and energy use to suit the load. Price on request.



Perrin & Rowe Shaker 800 ceramic single bowl SinkShaker £800/€607.45.



Caple's DF630 freestanding dishwasher comes with an A+++ energy rating and an A for washing and drying performance. With seven programmes, which include a one-hour express wash at 62°C. Price on request.



SINKS, TAPS AND DISHWASHERS



The Kiora Z from **Duravit** is a new addition to the Kiora range. The Kiora Z, a ceramic sink designed by Sieger Design for Duravit, can be used comfortably from both sides with a uniform design that concentrates on the bowl thereby offering freedom of movement and lots of space for working at the sink. Price on request.



The powerwash dishwasher from **Hoover** is extremely quiet and boasts a generous capacity which accommodates 15 place settings - 25 per cent more than a standard 12 place dishwasher. When the Powerwash programme is selected, the spray arm directs a highly concentrated water and detergent solution directly onto the crockery via six multi-directional water jets. Price on request.

The stunning and slick **Gorenje** Simplicity dishwashers are designed to deliver superb contemporary looks and optimum performance. Price on request.





The **Quooker** Fusion is a three in one, hot, cold and 100°C boiling water tap which completely replaces the kettle in the modern kitchen. It can be installed in a new kitchen or retrofitted in an existing one; alone, or with Quooker's Combi system, which mixes 100°C boiling water with the cold feed to provide hot, cold and boiling water, all from the cold feed alone, saving energy, water and domestic fuel bills. From £1,150 for Fusion tap alone, from £1,450 for Fusion with Combi system. Price on request.

Electrolux free standing dishwasher in stainless steel. Price on request.

STOCKISTS

A

Astracast

Potter Cowan,
Belfast 028 9037 0050,
Dublin 01 8423666 and
Cork 021 4354560.
www.astracast.co.uk

C

Candy

Dominic Smith Electrical,
Dublin 01 2965511 and
Gorey 053 9484444.
www.candy-domestic.co.uk

Caple

0117 938 1900 **(s)**.
www.caple.co.uk **(s)**.

CDA

Bodel, Lisburn 028 9267 2412.
www.cda-europe.com

Carron Pheonix

AB Distributors,
Belfast 028 9023 5088.

Bodel Distributors,

Lisburn 028 9267 2412.

BJ Carragher Distributors,
Saintfield 028 9751 1071.

Highway Wholesalers,
Waterford 051 872615 **(s)**.
www.carron.com

D

Duravit

Fawcett & Co,
Belfast 028 9068 6900.
Haldane Fisher,
Newry 028 3026 3201,
Bangor 028 9127 1711,
Belfast 028 9066 5000
and 028 9022 5000,
Lisburn 028 9267 6161,
Portadown 028 3833 7321
and 028 3884 0440.
0845 500 7787 **(s)**.
www.duravit.co.uk

E

Electrolux

0141 95100 **(s)**.
www.electrolux.co.uk

F

Franke

KAL, Dublin 01 4136400 **(s)**.
Bodel Distributors,
Lisburn 028 9267 2412.
www.franke.co.uk

G

Gorenje

www.gorenje.co.uk

Grohe

AGM Distributors,
Belfast 028 9045 2613
Showtime,
Kildare 01 5051020 **(s)**.
www.grohe.co.uk

H

Hoover

Dominic Smith Electrical,
Dublin 01 2965511 and
Gorey 053 9484444.
www.hoover.co.uk

N

Neptune

www.neptune.com

P

Perrin & Rowe

Bodel Distributors,
Lisburn 028 9267 2412 **(s)**.
Kitchen Accessories,
Clondalkin 01 4570821 **(s)**.
www.perrinandrowe.co.uk

Q

Quooker

0207 9233355 **(s)**.
www.quooker.com

S

Smeg

Bodel Distributors,
Lisburn 028 9267 2412.
www.smeguk.com

READER'S REFERENCE:

(s) = Phone for stockist details.



A photograph of a traditional stone house with a chimney and a driveway. The house is built of light-colored stone blocks and has a dark grey tiled roof. A black downspout runs down the side of the house. A window with a stained glass design is visible on the left. A wooden gate is in the foreground, and a hedge is on the right. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Traditionally Charming

Simon and Patricia have lived in their period property in Bangor for the past 15 years and during this time they have sympathetically decorated and filled it with lots of wonderful memories.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ROBINSON.





Recently, Simon and Patricia have extended and renovated the back of their house, which now boasts a stunning kitchen from Wilsons Conservation & Building Products within a larger open-plan living dining area.

As Patricia explains, 'The kitchen was half the size it is now. We extended and created an open-plan space to include the adjacent family room. My brother, David Henderson, is a builder and he did a great job. Extending the kitchen has allowed for more natural light into the back of the house with the two velux windows in the ceiling and for this reason we also added the Baskil wooden doors with glass panels which lead out to the patio area, which is perfect for a table and chairs for casual dining outside in the warmer weather. We also sympathetically replaced our old sash windows in this part of the house.

'We have a traditional home and like to keep this feel throughout the house, so it was on a trip to Wilsons to pick an original parquet flooring for our bedroom that I fell in love with this kitchen design. I have always admired traditional kitchen designs, and when I saw this one on display in their showroom I knew Wilsons, and in turn, Nigel Wilson, could help me achieve my dream kitchen, which is now a family-friendly open-plan space that we can all be in together.

'While Nigel was very helpful, I did know the overall look and colour scheme that I wanted. As I say, I had been to look at other kitchens, but felt that Nigel's designs were more bespoke and afforded for more personality. I love details such as my corner mahogany cupboard and the chopping board that sits pride of place on the island with my name carved into it.







'Lighting is really important to me and I love the light fittings in here. In fact, I actually bought the lights first! I always wanted a larger Canterbury lantern and while these are traditionally outside I wanted mine inside. I ordered it online from Jim Lawrence and I did worry if it would be the right size, but Simon made me a template to put my mind at ease and I just love it.

'Above the island we have two large pendant lights which Nigel has told me originate from Longbridge Leyland motor works and I purchased the chandelier from Laura Ashley to sit above an old farmhouse dining table which Nigel sourced for me. I sourced the chairs for around the table with the help of Jemima Eastwood from J'adore Décor in Bangor, who has helped me with other decorative touches in this part of the house.

'I had always wanted an old farmhouse table with a bench and chairs in my kitchen as well as an island. To be honest, the island was top of my list when it came to deciding on all of the elements of the kitchen. It is painted in Farrow & Ball's Manor House Grey and is contrasted with the wooden





work surface. I love it and while I toyed with the idea of a small sink unit within it, with Nigel's advice we decided against it and have kept this area for seating, storage and a food prep area.

'While I love old fashioned features, such as my butler's sink which I have reused from my previous kitchen, I do have mod-cons here in the kitchen with my electric range cooker with its induction hob and my hot water tap. I didn't even consider an Aga after speaking to friends who have one. I'm not a keen cook at the best of times, so getting to grips with Aga cooking wasn't something I wished to try! The pantry helps to hide my microwave as well as offering space for food storage.

'It was my brother who suggested adding the panelling to the walls in this part of the house. I had never considered doing this, but I feel it really finishes off this area. We painted the panels in Farrow & Ball Cornforth White and the walls are painted in Farrow & Ball Strong White and we opted for a solid oak floor from Junckers. We have also added the neo-classical radiators in here and the entrance hall, which again came from Wilsons.





'I am still waiting on a rug and footstool to finish off the living area and I'm looking for paintings to decorate the walls in here. I love all my nick nacks and deciding on decorative finishing touches and I use interior magazines to help me source a few different brands. I love hearts and flowers as you may notice looking around the house. Friends would tend to buy me heart shaped ornaments because they know I love them. I sourced the cushions on kitchen chairs from Susie Watson Designs and my floral curtains, lampshade and some cushions are from here too. The

hare print blinds on the patio doors are from Peony & Sage and I had a matching lampshade made in this fabric.

'In this open-plan space, and throughout the whole of our home I have a number of pieces which mean a lot to me because they come from my parents' and grandparents homes, as well as Simon's parents. From the little unit by the table in the kitchen, which was mum and dad's, to mum's leather armchair in the living room or the works of art on the walls, which were birthday cards made by Simon's sister which I



have framed, we've a number of pieces that have been given to us over the years which I have upcycled.

As well as the relaxed sitting room off the newly extended kitchen, there are another two reception rooms at the front of the house. One with an atmospheric woodburner and the TV which is perfect for relaxing in this light, bright space. Also adding light and space to this room is the Patricia mirror from Laura Ashley. 'I just had to have this' laughs Patricia. The other living room houses Simon's stereo and he would often retire to this room and listen to

his music. There is a gas fire in here and the curtains are made from a beautiful Mulberry fabric. The sofa was a wedding present and had been recovered over the years.

Heading upstairs to the bedroom where the beautiful parquet floor from Wilsons is complemented by a sleigh bed and antique mahogany furniture which was actually Patricia's parents. There's also an authentic fireplace and ensuite in this room and Patricia has opted for another pretty chandelier from Laura Ashley for above the bed.

As well as the two children's rooms upstairs, Simon also has an office in this part of the house. In the upstairs bathroom a handpainted roll top bath takes centre stage. With bee wallpaper from Peony & Sage and a chandelier from Laura Ashley adding personality to this room. 'I don't like things to be too matchy-matchy and tend to mix it up throughout the house', adds Patricia. 'I just love my home and I get real pleasure from looking after it and spending time here with freinds and family.' 🏠



In the upstairs bathroom a handpainted roll top bath takes centre stage. With bee wallpaper from Peony & Sage adding personality to this room.

Create the look

FROM THE BANGOR HOME

*Recreate the period charm found in
Simon and Patricia's Bangor home.*



Driftwood heart wreath from
The Contemporary Home.
£20. www.tch.net



Suffolk high back seasoned
oak bar stool from
Neptune. £295/€355.
www.neptune.com



Jackson pendant light in matt grey from
Made.com. £59. www.made.com



Laura Ashley Pussy Willow
cushion. £50. www.lauraashley.com



Wingback vintage leather
armchair from **Artisanti.**
£1,452. www.artisanti.com





Escape to the Country

Once home to musicians, this open-plan loft style property in County Kilkenny, initially designed with a large performance area, has been sensitively transformed into a stunning and functional family home by its present owners Felicia and Roland.





Throughout, the scheme has been kept neutral with walls in shades of chalky white, and although the interiors have a uniquely contemporary feel, the couple have somehow managed to make their collected pieces work within the space.

Longing to swap the anonymity and pace of city living for a country retreat is what led the couple from Dublin to a stunning contemporary restored farmhouse in a tranquil and scenic spot in Co. Kilkenny. 'We were both longing for a rural existence, Roland had been brought up on a farm in Gloucestershire, so he had happy memories of country life and we both wanted a break from the city so decided once the children were educated we would make the move.'

After a lengthy search between 2001-2006, the couple came across this unique and beautifully restored farmhouse. 'We were at once smitten by the space, the light and the fabulous views. The old buildings dated back to the sixteen hundreds and the house was owned by a couple of musicians, Maya Homburger and Barry Guy, who had bought the site when it just consisted of a series of derelict stone buildings. Together with architect Brian Hamilton, they embarked on an elaborate design that involved the extensive re-modeling of the derelict buildings, incorporating a striking and unusual oak framed loft style design into the old structure with an extensive use of glass that gave it a contemporary edge. They employed UK based company Carpenter Oak to build the structure who in turn worked closely with the architect Roderick James to come up with the final innovative design that fulfilled their brief, which included a large open-plan performance area.'









So when the couple purchased the property it was totally open-plan, with the performance area on the second floor. 'Initially seduced by its proportions and the beauty of the space we were very hesitant to make any alterations, but as we lived in it we realised it was totally impractical for a family, there was no privacy and very little storage. As it had been designed for two people as a working and occupation space,' says Felicia.

Felicia and Roland decided they needed to section off a part of the open-plan performance area and divide it into bedrooms to make it much more practical for day to day life. But they were keen not to destroy the beauty of the structure. 'We were very aware that we needed to repeat the materials that had been originally used in the house so any alterations we made would look as seamless as possible,' explains Felicia.

Downstairs the house consists of a large open-plan kitchen-dining-living area and two comfortable double bedrooms. Upstairs, with the new sections to the open-plan space, there are now two double bedrooms, a large wet room, an open-plan sitting room study area and an upper gallery, all beautifully finished and boasting spectacular views of the surrounding countryside.

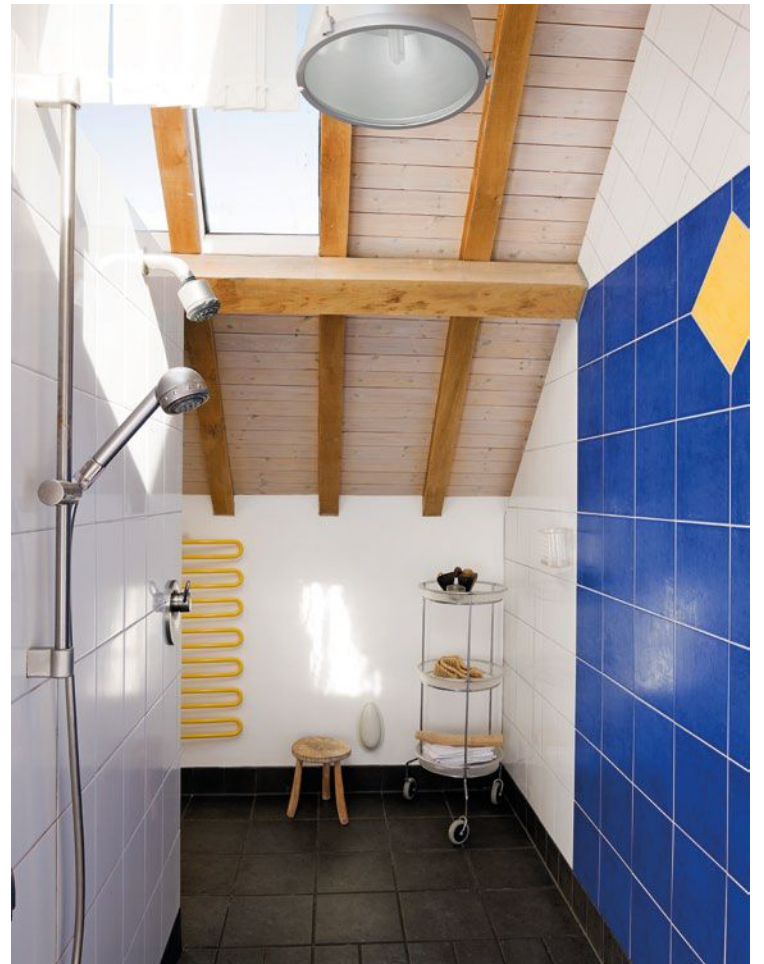




‘Over the years we have gradually accumulated a large collection of furniture and paintings, some of which we have inherited or found in auctions or craft fairs. We both have very eclectic tastes. Roland is a paintings conservator-restorer, he has a great knowledge about antiques and paintings and we are both interested in arts and crafts. We were keen that all our interesting pieces would work in the house without making it look or feel too cluttered.’ The scheme has been kept neutral throughout, with walls in shades of chalky white, and although the interiors have a uniquely contemporary feel, the couple have somehow managed to make their collected pieces work within the space.

When Roland and Felicia bought the place they not only wanted a family home but they also intended to use the house to supplement their income. ‘We decided we could rent the house out as we have a large annex that we have converted into an apartment that we can use when the house is let. We both enjoy having guests here and like us, they seem to appreciate the unspoilt countryside and the peace and quiet. It is an ideal place for artists, walkers and tourists.







‘We both enjoy having guests here and like us, they seem to appreciate the unspoilt countryside and the peace and quiet. It is an ideal place for artists, walkers and tourists.’

There are some beautiful walks along the River Barrow and some lovely local gardens to visit and some picturesque historic sites to see,’ says Felicia.

Felicia continues, ‘Ultimately we’re both really pleased we made the decision to move to the country. I’m sure we will never tire of this breathtakingly beautiful house in its bucolic setting and it is wonderful that we have the opportunity to allow others to share our experience. Our move from the city has certainly changed our lives and the pace at which we live.’ 🏠

Create the look

FROM THE KILKENNY HOME

Felicia and Roland's home in County Kilkenny is an eclectic mix of wooden and metallic pieces which blend together perfectly.



Gold cherub candelabra cold cast in resin and brass from **Alison at Home**. £125. Phone 020 7087 2900. www.alisonathome.com



Reclaimed teak vintage coffee chest from **Artisanti**. 110 x 60 x 44cm. £677. Phone 0845 259 1410 for your nearest irish stockist. www.artisanti.com



Tulpan blue and white porcelain vase from **Skandihome**. £169. Phone 020 3441 5821. www.skandihome.com

Contrast button cotton tub chair from **Oliver Bonas**. £395. Phone 020 8974 0110 or visit www.oliverbonas.com





New and Improved

With three small children and a very hectic work schedule Alan and Emer needed an office and a bigger, more functional kitchen, so they decided to update and extend their home in Dublin to incorporate a bright spacious kitchen dining area and allocated an old part of the house for an office space.

EDITORIAL AND STYLING BY PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS. PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILIP LAUTERBACH.





When the couple first set eyes on this Victorian property, although a little dark and dated, they both could see it had a huge amount of potential. ‘We loved the character of the house and the wealth of original features but we knew we would need more space as the children were getting bigger so our main priority was to extend,’ explains Emer.

Alan and Emer bought the property in 2006 but didn’t actually start work on it until 2009. The formerly gloomy property had a small very dated kitchen which was not at all practical for a growing family and desperately needed modernising. The whole house lacked the storage space they needed for the practicalities of family life. The couple could see that they had the space to extend into the garden so decided to enlist the help of an architect to put their ideas down on paper. ‘Most importantly I really wanted a light bright open-plan kitchen dining area that was ultimately practical and functional for the family as well as an office with plenty of storage from which I could run my hamper business, Hampers and Co, so it was very important for me to have a functional office space. I have a huge amount of samples and packaging as I am always sourcing and discovering new and interesting culinary delights to create exceptional hampers, all of which have to be beautifully packaged, so I really needed my own space for that,’ explains Emer.

‘We loved the character of the house and the wealth of original features but we knew we would need more space as the children were getting bigger so our main priority was to extend.’







She continues, 'Our first move was to contact architect Denis Gilbert who had been recommended to us. We had a clear idea of what we wanted for the extension and Denis was able to put our ideas down on paper and see the plans through to the approval stage.' The wall at the back of the house was knocked down and the couple extended into the garden building a large single storey extension fitted with Velux roof lights and a large expanse of windows and French doors. The whole process from the planning stage to the building took around a year. 'We had a delay of three months when the company supplying the work tops for the kitchen went into liquidation. We had already paid for the work tops in full and had to pay out a second time in order to get them delivered,' says Emer. Despite the delay and having to cope with no worktops and no fitted sink the wait was really worth it. The couple were delighted with the bright layout of the new kitchen extension which has made a huge difference to the whole house and they now have a huge amount of extra space.





In keeping with the rest of the house the new kitchen is traditional in style. The central island is the main focus and the layout is very practical and functional to cope with the demands of family life. The once small, dingy kitchen has now been stylishly converted into a lovely light, bright spacious kitchen dining area. 'We are really pleased with the end result. The large windows let the natural light flood in and the room has a lovely outlook onto the garden and it is really family friendly.'

Emer's colour scheme for the new extension was inspired by a painting she bought in Italy. 'It is bright and has lovely pink and purple hues to it. I used a paint called 'Elephant's Breath', which was the exact colour I was looking for. I decided to paint most of the units in White Tie and the dresser and the curved cabinet in Elephant's Breath both by Farrow & Ball.'









Emer loved the traditional charm of the house so was keen to preserve as many of the original features wherever possible. She also decided to keep the layout of the old house as it was originally, new floors and bathrooms were fitted and the whole house was redecorated. 'Instead of incorporating my much needed office into the new extension which was the original idea, I decided it would make more sense to convert one of the reception rooms at the front of the house into my office. It was designed to have plenty of open shelving so I could easily store a selection of my hampers. It works perfectly as I have an office that is separate from the main living space which means I can now work, cook and entertain the children with ease.'

Emer concludes, 'All the disruption has definitely paid off, it was a big project to take on while running a business and having to cope with three small children but we are so pleased we did it, we now have a lovely light, bright and spacious family home it's exactly what we wanted.' 🏠

Create the look

FROM THE DUBLIN HOME

Alan and Emer's bright and spacious home in Dublin is furnished with a blend of classic and contemporary pieces.



The Carron 4.7 red wood burnings stove from **Ludlow Stoves**. Both classic in design and extremely practical, a Carron stove is an efficient and clean way to enjoy the charm of a solid fuel-real fire. £599. Phone 015 8486 1628. www.ludlowstoves.co.uk

Brazilia tan brown leather dining chair from **Alexander & Pearl**. Other matching furniture also available. £675. Phone 020 8508 0411. www.alexanderandpearl.co.uk



Elodie chandelier from **Sweetpea & Willow**. With 12 arms each embellished with many finely cut crystal droplets that will reflect the light beautifully. £1,295. Phone 0845 257 2627. www.sweetpeaandwillow.com



Country Ash range two drawer bedside table from **Melody Maison** is an incredibly stylish distressed cream wooden bedside table with limed finish top. £174.95. www.MelodyMaison.co.uk



SPRING/SUMMER 2015 ISSUE
ON SALE 20th MARCH

**OVER
190 PAGES**

ALL IRELAND KITCHEN GUIDE

SPRING/SUMMER 2015 • VOLUME 28



60 PAGES OF READERS' KITCHENS
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IRELAND'S LARGEST SELLING KITCHEN MAGAZINE

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF IRELAND'S HOMES INTERIORS & LIVING

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
PLAN YOUR DREAM KITCHEN**

How to make it work



BY DENISE O'CONNOR
OF OPTIMISE DESIGN

Finding inspiration was something that my clients would have struggled with before the arrival of sites like Houzz. The site has grown in popularity in the last couple of years and it has opened up a world of ideas and possibilities for anyone planning any kind of update to their home. There is only one slight issue that we are encountering; although Houzz is expanding into Europe, the site is still predominantly populated with images from the US. The result is that many clients are trying to recreate spaces that could not possibly work within the confines of an Irish home.

By stepping down not only will you clearly define the living space but it will also allow you to achieve higher glazing at the back of the house which will let in a lot more light.



Changes in level and a tunnel fireplace create a clear division between the different areas within the open plan space whilst maintaining visual connection.



We had clients who lived in the States for a long time and on returning to Ireland were fortunate enough to be able to build their own home. They wanted to incorporate some of the features from their US house in their new house in Ireland - some of which they did with great success like having an open-plan kitchen diner with island and banquette dining area which in 1980s Dublin was quite radical. But a feature that did not work was the introduction of verandas that provided shelter outside all of the reception rooms. This had worked really well in the States where there was fabulous sunshine for most of the year. Here, however, the verandas only succeeded in blocking valuable sunlight from reaching the rooms and over time the outdoor area became damp and rather dreary. Taking cues and inspiration from these warmer countries is great but you need to find a way to adapt the idea to work with our climate. We had other clients who had lived in Australia and had adapted their home beautifully taking the best of Australian open-plan design and making it work in their home in Dublin.



Using a change in level is a great way to break up an open plan space.

The reason that Australian homes work so well is that the open-plan space is broken up into very distinct zones making it far more functional and versatile than a large open space that lacks intimacy and is difficult to furnish. They are also light and airy spaces as sunshine is in abundance down under. Here, however, we need to plan carefully and to try to maximise the natural light to create that same sense of light and space.

To break up the living space our clients used a change in level – by stepping down not only did they clearly define the living space from the dining area but they also allowed higher glazing at the back of the house which let in a lot more light. The space was further divided using features like a see-through fireplace and open shelving to create a division between areas whilst still maintaining a visual connection. Their home functions perfectly as each living space is clearly defined within its open-plan footprint.

Homes in Ireland are very different from the often vast and very generously laid out houses in these wonderful warmer climates. It's fantastic to take inspiration from these homes but find a way to adapt the look to work in an Irish context.



Homes in Ireland are very different from the often vast and very generously laid out houses in these wonderful warmer climates. It's fantastic to take inspiration from these homes but find a way to adapt the look of foreign layout to work in an Irish context.

Denise O'Connor is an architect and MD of architecture at interior design consultancy Optimise Design, Dublin 01 6619020. Visit the Optimise blog at www.optimise-design.com Follow us on pinterest www.pinterest.com/optimisedesign



A Timeless Classic

When Millie and her husband built a new home in Cavan, they wanted a classic kitchen in the style of the one that served them well for 21 years. A visit to O'Connors of Drumleck led them down the right path with beautiful results.





‘We moved house and built a new home,’ says Millie, ‘but we loved the style of our old kitchen. It was 21 years old and classical in design so really it’s a timeless style that doesn’t date so we wanted to go along the same lines to ensure that longevity. I was recommended O’Connors of Drumleck by a friend and also saw one of their ads in a magazine. I happened to be passing one day and went along to see what they could offer and it all started from there. I researched it a good bit but we were quite tight for time and we were busy so it all worked out very well. They’re a very experienced company and it’s a family business which is great.’

Having had the same kitchen for such a long period of time, you become accustomed to how you want things and what works for your particular space and household situation. In Millie’s case she knew what she wanted and provided a significant wishlist to designer John. This ranged from specific storage combinations to a coffee centre to American fridge, Aga with module and a pantry. It all came together so well. However with the bespoke nature of O’Connors work, she was open to new ideas and variations. ‘Working with O’Connors was great. They advised as to where I would situate things and how the kitchen would function. They were very helpful in that



regard. John came down and analysed the space and saw what was possible. We got our heads together and there wasn't too much of going back and forth. He knew what I was thinking. It went very smoothly. John planned the kitchen and followed what I wanted and I was able to say yes or no as it progressed. He knew where we were coming from very early in the process and the first plan overall was pretty much perfect. I had a list of things I liked and wanted incorporated, it was just how it would all fit in and where.'

One of the standout aspects of the kitchen and indeed a signature piece of O'Connors design repertoire is the incredible

larder. Millie saw what was possible with such a design when she visited the showroom and wanted one incorporated. As a result more wall space was made available to allow this to happen. She was thrilled with the pantry as it is so accessible. Not only that, the craftsmanship in the design is stunning and sets the standard for the level of design expertise and level of finish throughout. This includes beautiful end panels at the window with a four piece curved cornice and Gothic style frames. 'The larder is a great feature and it's beautifully made. I never had one before and I find it absolutely brilliant. If my food isn't there or in the fridge, I simply don't have it!



It's convenient, I can see everything at a glance and it's all handcrafted and beautifully put together.'

The flooring used sets off the kitchen beautifully. It is a Cognac Oak engineered floor from Trunk Flooring that works well in tandem with the underfloor heating. The colour is beautiful, as is the grain. 'It's very easy to keep too and it shows off the kitchen wonderfully as there's a great contrast. I carried the same wood right through into the living area and they are long boards so it has a lovely sense of space and unbroken flow.' So, under pressure with deadlines the kitchen took around eight to ten weeks from the initial meeting to completion which worked seamlessly with Millie's timescale. In fact, this sounds like the ultimate smooth process with mutual respect and admiration from both parties involved. And after all the hard work and finishing touches, Millie already has a few firm favourites, 'My Aga is always my favourite and always has been, I just couldn't operate without it. But what I didn't have before is the hybrid attachment which is an add-on and that's fabulous. After that, of course the larder which is absolutely beautiful. I love it. I would highly recommend working with O'Connors, they were a fantastic help to us and a thoroughly professional and very experienced company.'

Kitchen Contacts

KITCHEN DESIGN

O'Connors of Drumleck

Castlebellingham 042 9372625.

www.oconnorkitchens.ie

Flooring: Cognac Oak from Trunk Flooring.

APPLIANCES

Range: AGA Cooker with module

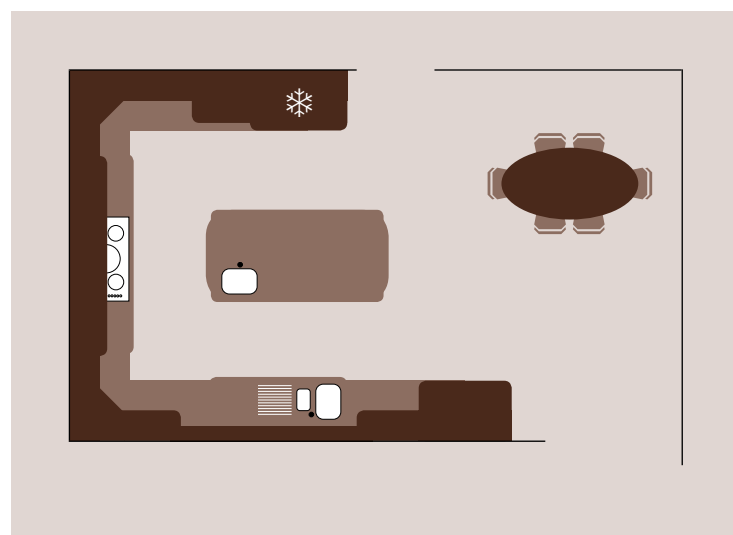
Fridge: Neff American

Coffee centre: Neff

Dishwasher: Neff

Microwave: Neff

Waste Disposal: InSinkerator



The Pigeon House Café

Savoury dishes from The Pigeon House Café
for you to try at home.



Roast Duck Breast with Pickled Beetroots, Blackberries & Merlot Vinegar Dressing.
(Recipe on following page)

Roast Duck Breast with Pickled Beetroots, Blackberries & Merlot Vinegar Dressing

Serves 4

Preparation Time: 15 mins

Cooking Time: 20 mins

INGREDIENTS

4 duck breast
Pickled beetroots
2 large golden beetroots,
2 large purple beetroots,
2 large pink beetroots, sliced into discs
300g apple juice
100g champagne vinegar
100g olive oil
50g sugar
5g salt

*Small bunch of Thyme
2 Bay leaves
* cook colours separately*

Blackberry Dressing

200ml merlot vinegar
50ml olive oil
20 blackberries sliced

METHOD

1 Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (gas mark 5).

2 Place beetroot juice, vinegar, olive oil, salt, sugar, thyme and bay in a small pot and bring to boil. Reduce to a medium heat and place the sliced beetroots in the liquid and cook for a further 8 minutes until the beetroots are tender. Remove from heat.

3 Place a large oven proof pan on a medium heat, place the duck in the pan, season with salt and

pepper and cook for two minutes on the skin side, turning over and cooking for one minute on the flesh side.

4 Turn onto skin side and place in the oven for 8 min for a medium cooked breast which will be pink in colour.

5 To make the Merlot Dressing, pour the Merlot Vinegar into a pot and simmer until it is reduced by ½, then add the sliced blackberry and 50ml olive oil and season to taste.

6 Take the duck breast out of the oven and let the meat rest for one minute before slicing.

To Serve

7 Arrange 3 of each colour of the beetroots on the plate, slice duck into three pieces and place around the Beetroots, spoon over the Merlot vinaigrette.

Chef Brian Walsh

The Pigeon House Café at the Delgany Inn in Wicklow is under the new management of Michelin Bib Gourmand awarded restaurateur Paul Foley and Chef Brian Walsh. It is now open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, with an eclectic menu for what promises to be exciting dining experience. Chef Brian Walsh brings with him his Michelin Bib Gourmand Award and is sticking to his philosophy of using high quality, local produce to create the dishes for his menus. Brian's passion for premium quality and taste is apparent in his creative and award winning dishes.



COMPETITION

Ireland's Homes Interiors & Living magazine and The Pigeon House Café are offering two lucky readers the chance to win a three course dinner for two with a bottle of house wine worth €80.

How to enter

Answer the following question: Where is The Pigeon House Café?

Send your answer, name, address, email and phone number marked **The Pigeon House Café Competition** to Ireland's Homes Interiors & Living magazine, PO Box 42, Bangor, County Down, BT19 7AD or Ashgrove House, Kill Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin or enter online at: www.ihil.net

Entries must be received no later than 5pm, Friday 20th March 2015. One entry per household. One separate email/postcard for each competition. Judge's decision is final. No cash alternative. Prizes are non-transferable. If you would like to receive our monthly Newsletter please include your email address with your entry.

Roast Salmon, Confit Fennel, Red Quinoa, Orange & Fennel Salad

Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 20 mins

INGREDIENTS

4 150g salmon portions (skinless)
100g red quinoa
4 fennel
2 oranges
½ teaspoon of salt
100g lemon juice
100g caster sugar
100g olive oil
1 bunch dill
1 tbsp butter

METHOD

1 Place quinoa in a pot, pour enough water over the quinoa to just cover it. Add a generous pinch of salt. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until liquid has evaporated and the grain has opened (turning slightly white in part) and set aside to allow the quinoa to cool.

2 Mix olive oil, caster sugar and lemon juice together.

3 To make the confit fennel, grate two of the heads of fennel and add most of the of lemon, sugar and olive oil mix, (approx. 200g) place in a pan and cook for 5 minutes on a medium heat until softened. Then take off the heat and set aside to cool down.

4 Segment an orange into a bowl.

5 Finely slice the two remaining fennel heads and

add to the oranges, add the chopped dill and the remaining lemon, sugar and olive oil mix.

6 Mix confit fennel with quinoa and chopped dill and season to taste.

7 Melt butter in a non-stick pan over a medium heat. Season salmon with salt and pepper and place skin side down in a non-stick pan, cook for two minutes on medium heat until turning golden.

8 Place in an oven at 180c for 6 minutes for just cooked pink flesh or for 10-12 minutes if you prefer poked through.

To serve

9 Place a large spoon of quinoa and confit fennel mix onto the plate.

10 Place roasted salmon on top and arrange fennel and orange salad around the salmon.



Shakshuka

INGREDIENTS

100ml olive oil
 2 large onions, finely sliced
 2 red peppers, finely sliced
 2 yellow peppers, finely sliced
 1 clove of garlic, minced
 2 bay leaves
 1 tsp chopped thyme leaves
 1 tsp cumin seeds
 1 tsp cumin powder
 1 tsp smoked paprika
 Pinch of cayenne pepper
 1 400g tin plum tomatoes
 1 tbsl caster sugar
 Salt and pepper to taste
 8 eggs
 Small bunch of coriander

Garlic yoghurt

200g natural yoghurt
 1 small clove of garlic minced
 1 small bunch of coriander chopped
 (Mix all ingredients together)

METHOD

1 In a large pan, dry roast the spices on a medium heat for 1 minute, then add the oil and the onion and cook for 5 minutes until soft and golden.

2 Add the peppers and the thyme, bay leaves and garlic. Cook for a further 5 minutes until the peppers have softened.

3 Add the tinned tomatoes, sugar and seasoning.

4 Reduce the heat and simmer for a further 20 minutes.

5 Adjust seasoning to taste.

6 Finally add the chopped coriander and stir, then divide into four small baking dishes.

7 Make two wells in each baking dish and crack an egg in to the well.

8 Season and place into an oven at 180c for 12-15 minutes until the eggs have set.

9 Remove from oven with care and drizzle with garlic yoghurt and sprinkle with chopped coriander and serve.





Duck Liver & Foie Gras Parfait with Pear & Onion Chutney and Celeriac Slaw

Serves 6

Preparation time: 15 mins prep

Cooking time: 50 minutes with 30 minutes chilling time

Duck Liver & Foie Gras Parfait

INGREDIENTS

500g of duck liver
225g foie gras
160g butter
2 eggs
250g sliced shallots
5g pink salt
150ml brandy
150ml port
150ml red wine
Bunch thyme
2 bay leaves

METHOD

1 Sweat the shallots, thyme, rosemary and bay in a teaspoon of butter until soft over a medium heat.

2 Add the brandy, port and red wine and reduce into shallots and leave to cool.

3 Bring the duck livers, foie gras, butter and eggs to room temperature.

4 Blend the duck livers and foie gras in a jug blender with the cooked shallots until very smooth.

5 Add the eggs one by one, blending as each egg is added.

6 Heat the butter gently in a pan and then add the soft butter in 3 parts blending as added.

7 Pass the smooth mixture through a fine sieve.

8 Pour into a mould and cover.

9 Put the moulds into an oven proof tray and fill the tray with water up to the level of the parfait. Bake moulds at 100°C, gas mark 1 for approximately 45 minutes.

11 Chill before serving.

Pear & Raisin Chutney

INGREDIENTS

500g finely diced shallots
300g diced pear
½ tsp cinnamon powder
½ tsp mustard powder

½ tsp ginger powder
15g finely diced ginger in heavy syrup
250g cider vinegar
150 muscavado sugar
10g butter

METHOD

1 Sweat the shallots over a medium heat in the butter until soft.

2 Add all the other ingredients and simmer until the liquid thickens to a jam-like consistency.

3 Leave to chill for 60 minutes.

Celeriac & Apple Slaw

INGREDIENTS

1 Granny Smith apple
½ celeriac
1 tsp of fresh finely chopped Parsley leaves
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
3 tbsp mayonnaise
Lemon juice to taste

METHOD

1 Slice apple and celeriac finely into strips with a mandolin or slicer.

2 Mix with mustard, mayonnaise and parsley and season to taste. ✕

Destination Ireland: County Donegal



County Donegal provides a brilliant backdrop for a wide range of activities such as golfing, angling, cycling, sailing and not to mention the beautiful treks and walks through the lakes and rivers. This stunning location also offers top class hotels, spas and restaurants that are sure to delight.



Photograph by Nutan.

Things to see and do

Inishowen Quad Safari & Lazer Wars is found on the outskirts of Buncrana. With quads and four different tracks to suit the level of experience. This is good for most weather conditions (except snow, frost and ice). The Lazer Wars have no age requirements, but the weight of the guns must be taken into consideration. You will be taken to the forestry on an army trailer and overalls and face paint are given out! They take groups of up to 18. Package deals are available for both quad biking and lazer wars. www.inishowenquadsafari.ie

Fort Dunree is a stunning site of natural beauty that draws increasing numbers of visitors to one of Inishowens most beautiful and peaceful locations. It boasts a network of walking paths, a wildlife exhibition, military displays, a shop, and a water front cafeteria. Fort Dunree now hosts art exhibitions, wildlife talks and yoga classes. It is open all year round. www.dunree.pro.ie

Glenveagh National Park is one of six national parks in Ireland, encompassing some 16,000 acres in the heart of the Derryveagh Mountains. The Glenveagh Visitor Centre is located on the northern end of Lough Veagh, near the edge



Malinbeg.
Photograph by Brian Morrison.



Slieve League Cliffs.
Photograph by Brian Morrison.

of the National Park. The extensive displays contained within provide an introduction to the parks natural and built history as well as providing information on walking trails and events. www.glenveaghnationalpark.ie

Glenveagh Castle is a 19th century mansion and one of the few of the great houses of Ireland that have been preserved in such beautiful condition with original furnishings as well as stunning gardens. Access to the castle is by guided tour which last approx. 30 mins. The tearoom is located in the castle courtyard and open daily from 11am to 5.30pm. Serving delicious homebaked scones, cakes, breads, soups and sandwiches.

Worth a visit is Portsalon Blue Flag beach, an extensive sandy location on the shores of Lough Swilly. It gently slopes towards the Atlantic ocean and is located in a natural habitat area. The beach at Portsalon can be reached by travelling north east in the R246 from Carrowkeel to Portsalon.

Another great location is Bundoran Beach which is found approximately 250m north of Bundoran town's main street. It is a sandy beach facing Donegal Bay and the Atlantic and is bounded on the north and south by rocks and on the east by the promenade roadway. It is a popular destination with surfers.

For some stunning scenery then head to Slieve League or Sliabh Liag. It is one of County Donegal's truly iconic visitor attractions that is found on the south west coast and is said to be the one of the highest and finest marine cliffs in Europe. A visit to Sliabh Liag will take your breathe away with its dramatic scenery, imposing cliff faces, and wild atlantic vistas. The Slieve League Cliffs Centre is also found here and organises tours as well as housing a craft shop, cafe and art gallery. www.slieveleaguecliffs.ie

Warden Beach, Portsalon.
Photograph by Roger Kinkad.





Where to stay

The Villa Rose Hotel is a 4 star, family owned, boutique spa hotel located in the bustling town of Ballybofey. The hotel is contemporary in design with the emphasis on absolute luxury. It includes Fara's Restaurant & Wine bar as well as The Forge Bar with live light entertainment every weekend. The V Spa has the latest in natural beauty and holistic therapies by Germaine De Cappuccini's Spa Marine. www.villarose.net

The Highlands Hotel is situated in the picturesque town of Glenties, in the heart of the Bluestack Mountains. Glenties is the ideal location for a weekend or midweek break as it is within a short drive of Glenveagh National Park and Slieve League Cliffs. The hotel has a Traditional Irish music session every Thursday night. www.highlandshotel.ie

Rosapenna Hotel and Golf Resort has been welcoming golfers to this part of Ireland since 1893. The luxury four star hotel is set between two sandy beaches and within 800 acres of rugged linksland along the beautiful Donegal coastline. It is home to two of Ireland's finest links courses, the Old Tom Morris Links originally laid out in 1893 and the Sandy Hills Links. www.rosapenna.ie

Where to eat

Located close to Fahan Marina, the Railway Tavern & Firebox Grill is a popular venue with locals and visitors. Warm and welcoming with big open fires and railway memorabilia it serves great freshly prepared dishes

using local produce such as Donegal crab, mussels and lamb. It is famous for its steaks and ribs which are cooked to perfection in the firebox in front of you. www.fireboxgrill.com

Rathmullan House Hotel is one of Ireland's friendliest and most atmospheric period houses. It is set in idyllic wooded grounds overlooking Lough Swilly and just a few steps from a two-mile long golden beach. Renowned for our award-winning food, locally sourced and expertly cooked, and beautifully furnished bedrooms in this 4 star hotel. www.rathmullanhouse.com

The Old Abbey Coffee Dock, located in the centre of Donegal Town offers a large selection of fresh and tasty snacks and meals. It's the perfect spot to take a break and unwind after exploring the county. www.abbeyhoteldonegal.com

Getting there

Ninety minutes from Belfast and under three hours from Dublin and Galway by car.

Essential contacts

www.govisitdonegal.com



Destination Abroad:

Easter Island

Easter Island is a historically intriguing, culturally compelling and scenically magical location in the Pacific Ocean. Known to the locals as Rapa Nui, It's a blissfully isolated gem where you can scuba dive in the crystal blue waters, take hikes into the wilderness, as well as wow at the ancient monumental statues that sprout up all around the island.



Things to see and do

Rano Raraku is a volcanic setting in the east of the island is where the majority of the Moai (the iconic Easter Island statues) are found. They were carved directly from compacted volcanic ash and can weigh over 80 tonnes. Legend has it that once they were carved they were able to walk to their platforms, some, however, proved too heavy to move – or refused to walk – and today dozens of giant heads sprout up from the green slopes of Rano Raraku. The largest Moai ever carved, the 20-metre tall El Gigante (The Giant), is still here.

To the east of Rano Raraku, right on the coast, is the dramatic Ahu Tongariki, a 200m-long setting where 15 colossal Moai are lined up; the largest number of Easter Island statues ever erected on a single platform. It is a truly remarkable sight.

On the southwest tip of the island is the vast crater of the extinct Rano Kau volcano. A hole in the far side of the crater, the result of the last eruption, means that the Pacific Ocean is visible, stretching away as far as the eye can see.

The idyllic Anakena beach is found on the north coast of the island. Close by are the Moai of Ahu Nau Nau, who were buried in sand for

many years, something that has largely protected them from the effects of weathering.

A short walk from Hanga Roa, Easter Island's only town, are some of the earliest surviving Moai: the oldest, Vinapu II, is believed to date from around 857 AD.

Seeing Easter Island from the saddle of a horse is a great way to experience the visual appeal of the island. With more horses than people on the island, there's plenty of opportunity to go riding with a great network of trails. A popular trek is a short ride to the highest point on the island for a 360-degree panorama of the Pacific. Guided treks lasting up to two days will allow you to see the more remote and stunning parts.

The best time of year to surf on Easter Island is during the island's winter months of January and February however, you can have a brilliant wave-riding experience at any time of year. Just be mindful of shifting winds and the occasional rain cloud. Tracking the tides is also essential as the rocky shoreline is exposed during low tide, so it is best to wait when the seas are high. For the uninitiated, the shallow bay at Pea Beach near Hanga-roa's town centre is a good location and is also a good place for more experienced surfers looking to perfect their flips and tricks.



If trekking is your thing, there are many farm roads and walking paths that criss-cross the island, offering dozens of routes for hikes that range from walk in the park to more strenuous. The island also has numerous caves that are best explored with the assistance of a local guide. While they aren't huge, many offer either archeological intrigue or stunning scenery.

From the harbour, there are numerous diving and snorkelling trips that leave the town of Hanga Roa. Visibility around Easter Island is spectacular so diving is a beautiful thing to do.

Where to stay

Hare NOI, features a spa, an outdoor pool and a restaurant. It is decorated with parquet floors and stylish furnishing and is a stunning five star hotel. International dishes can be ordered at the property's restaurant and the city centre is just five kilometres away. www.noihotels.com/en/hotel/hare-noi/

Hotel Manutara is located just 500 metres from Mataverí airport and two kilometres from the city centre. It has an outdoor pool and a beautiful garden on site and provides a tranquil environment. www.hotelmanutara.cl

Altiplanico Rapa Nui is set in a Rapa Nui overlooking the sea and offers private terraces. It features a pool and Anakena Beach is a 15-minute drive away. www.altiplanico.cl

Where to eat

Compared to mainland Chile, Easter Island is expensive as many things have to be flown or shipped in the upside however is that there is no shortage of fresh fish, mangoes and pineapples as well as the delicious local banana bread called Poe.

Haka Honu found in Hanga Roa is a festive restaurant that runs along the beach and serves hearty portions of local fish and seafood. It is rumoured to get some of the best picks of fish on the island. In the evening it is a popular place for people to come for drinks.

Te Moana also in Hanga Roa is an inviting blue and wood restaurant on the waterfront with an expansive ocean view. They serve generous portions of fish, meat, pasta, and pizza with excellent service is excellent. The Thai fish soup is definitely worth a try. The Moana also specialises in cocktails and mixed drinks which will go perfectly with the beautiful Easter Island sunset.



Getting there

You can fly direct to Easter Island from Santiago in Chile three times a week.

Essential contacts

www.easterislandtourism.com



BY DEIRDRE PRINCE

The Lawn Ranger

At this time of the year, our eyes are drawn towards the lawn and if it is regularly used as a sports field, sometimes the wear and tear can leave what was once your green lawn, looking like a quagmire. But do not fear as almost all lawns benefit from a bit of tender loving care and in no time, you can turn it back into a lush green carpet, even when it has been tinged with frost for most of the winter months. (Fig.1)

Weeding

There is one weed which you can be guaranteed will thrive no matter what condition your lawn is in and that is the beloved dandelion. Their large leaves smother any grass trying to succeed and when its bright yellow flowers turn to seed, it is one of the best at dispersing its parachute type seed with the slightest puff of wind. (Fig.2)

Edging

While it can seem very time consuming, trimming the edge of your lawn stops the grass from growing into your borders and instantly neatens your garden. If your grass edge is a bit dishevelled looking, invest in a half-moon edger to reshape it. I love the edge of this bowling green in Port Sunlight in England. It is so straight and crisp and definitely creates a neat boundary to the lawn. (Fig.3)

Watering

In order to establish a new lawn, it is important to water it regularly. New or young lawns can die in excessive heat so, even with the water charges imminent, thoroughly drench your lawn in the evening, to avoid water evaporation. (Maybe even get a water butt to cut down on charges.)

Feeding

In March and April, when grass starts to grow, apply a slow release fertiliser to your lawn, high in nitrogen but also contains phosphorus and potash too. Don't overdo it on the lawn feed as it has an adverse affect and burns patches on your lawn. Apply the feed when rain is forecast so it gets washed down to the roots. If it doesn't rain, then the feed should be watered in. Most lawn feeds produce greener lawns in about a week. To restore a lawn, feed it again in autumn, which will encourage strong roots.

Filling Bare patches

If your garden has been hosting many football or rugby matches, then it is probably in need of some repair. When sowing new grass seed, ensure that you buy a tough variety of grass which will survive drought and hard play. There are even some fake lawn 'varieties' which in the past, would look luminous but now its possible to get synthetic grass (**Fig.4**) which looks quite realistic.

Mowing your lawn

Often, gardeners are keen to produce a bowling green surface, setting the mower on the lowest cut, but cutting the lawn is harmful in many ways. It removes too large a proportion of the growing leaf and weakens the plant. It also exposes the roots to the sun which can also have a weakening effect. However, grass needs to be mowed regularly during the growing season as this will

encourage the roots to spread. Leave the lawn longer in the summer, about 5 to 10cm as this will make it less prone to drought. (**Fig.5 & 6**)

Pets and your lawn

If you have a four-legged friend that shares your garden, then you are probably aware that canine urine can kill patches of your lawn. If you can monitor where your dog urinates, you can minimise the damage by diluting it with water.

Making a new Lawn

Preparing the ground for a new lawn is vital and a high quality lawn can only be produced on well-drained ground. Ensure that the ground is well drained and that the surface is quickly cleared of rain before any new lawn is attempted.

Seeding or Turfing

Seeding can be done either in spring or autumn. If you are planning to sow in spring, ensure that

the threat of frost is gone. April is generally the best month for sowing a lawn in spring. If you are planning a new lawn in autumn, its best to wait until after August.

The selection of seed is very important. Soils can vary from area to area. Zones within gardens can vary too from very shady and damp to exposed and dry. It is worth having a chat with your local garden or nursery supplier to get advice on the type of seed best suited to your garden.

A new lawn will benefit from the application of a good fertiliser to ensure that new roots are well nourished and will produce a healthy grass.

If you use turf or roll-out lawn, treat the soil as you would if you were seeding it. Lay the rolls of lawn in a closely fitted, brick-type pattern so the joints are staggered and try to fit them as quick as you can, as they can dry out. (**Fig.7**)

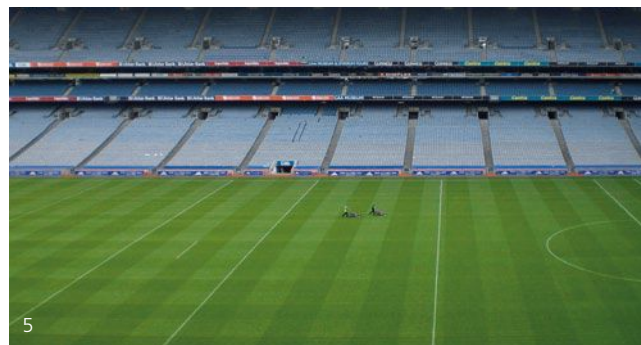
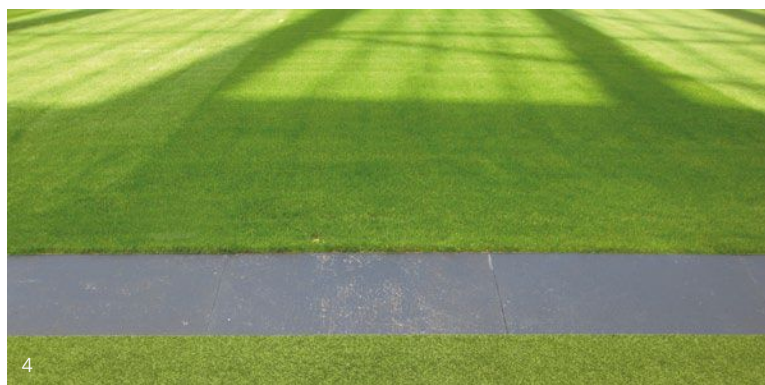


Fig 1 by Susan Dennehy. All other photos by Deirdre Prince.

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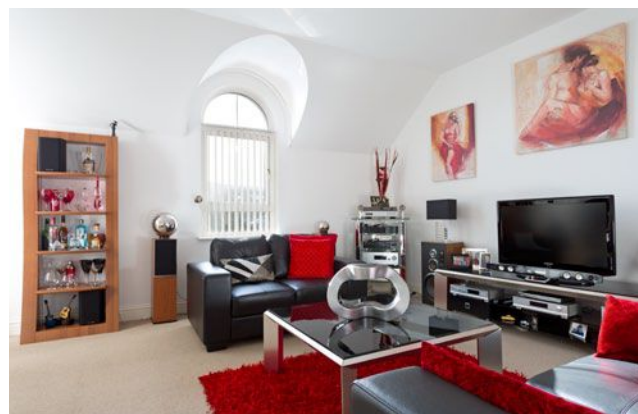
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Style Icon

The Fabergé Egg

Fabergé was founded in 1842 by jeweller Gustav Fabergé. In 1885, the first Imperial egg was produced. The egg was a gift to the Czarina Maria. It reminded her of home and each year thereafter, a new egg was commissioned by the Czar and created by Fabergé for the Czarina. The eggs became elaborately more jewelled, conveyed historical meaning and had a hidden surprise. The Czar gave his wife an egg every year during the Russian Orthodox Easter festival. From 1895 to 1916, his successor, Nicholas II, gave two Easter eggs each year, one to his wife and one to his mother. A total of fifty Imperial eggs were made for the Russian Czars, but several have been lost. There were seven additional eggs made for Alexander and Varvara Kelkh. Malcolm Forbes had the largest privately owned collection of Fabergé eggs and after he died his heirs authorised Sothebys (in 2004) to auction off his large Fabergé collection, but before the auction, a private sale took place and the entire collection was bought by Victor Vekselberg and taken back to Russia. These eggs are exquisite and to collect even the reproductions is only for the those with deep pockets. But there is something about a Fabergé egg that even if you can't own one, you can still enjoy looking at them.

Price: On request.

Stockist: Today there are authorised reproductions, but like all collecting, always do your research before purchasing.





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